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Volume 3 in the KINGDOM OF SORCERY Trilogy



Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

ADVENTURE 11 GAMEBOOK

CLASH OF THE SORCERERS



By Morris Simon

CHARACTER STATS CARD

CLASH OF THE SORCERERS



NAME: Carr Delling

CHAR. CLASS: *Magic-user*

SKILL POINTS:

Intelligence: 16 + ____ = ____

Charisma: 10 + ____ = ____

HIT POINTS: 4 + _____ = _____

PERMANENT PERSONAL SPELLS —

check when activated and deduct 1 point from intelligence skill score.*

<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehend Languages	<input type="checkbox"/> Protection from Evil
<input type="checkbox"/> Detect Evil	<input type="checkbox"/> Protection from Normal Missiles
<input type="checkbox"/> Detect Invisibility	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Magic
<input type="checkbox"/> Detect Magic	<input type="checkbox"/> Tongues
<input type="checkbox"/> Infravision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unseen Servant

*A complete list of spells appears on page 13.

FACE TO FACE WITH THE UNDEAD!

A stench of decay and filth suddenly fills the chamber you are in. You spin around in terror to see a horrible undead thing with burning eyes rise from a bench amid a suffocating cloud of dust. The mummified creature wears a thick gray robe similar to your Cloak of Elvenkind. On its head is a tarnished crown of some dark metal, perhaps adamantite.

Your eyes widen in terror as you realize that this must be the undead lich of the last sorcerer-king of Bhukod! He has survived the past five centuries on the strength of his own powers and those of the robe he wears—the robe you seek—the Robe of the Archmagi.

“Get away from me!” you scream, as the undead monster extends a bony hand toward you. You know you should think of a spell to cast, but you are possessed by fear.

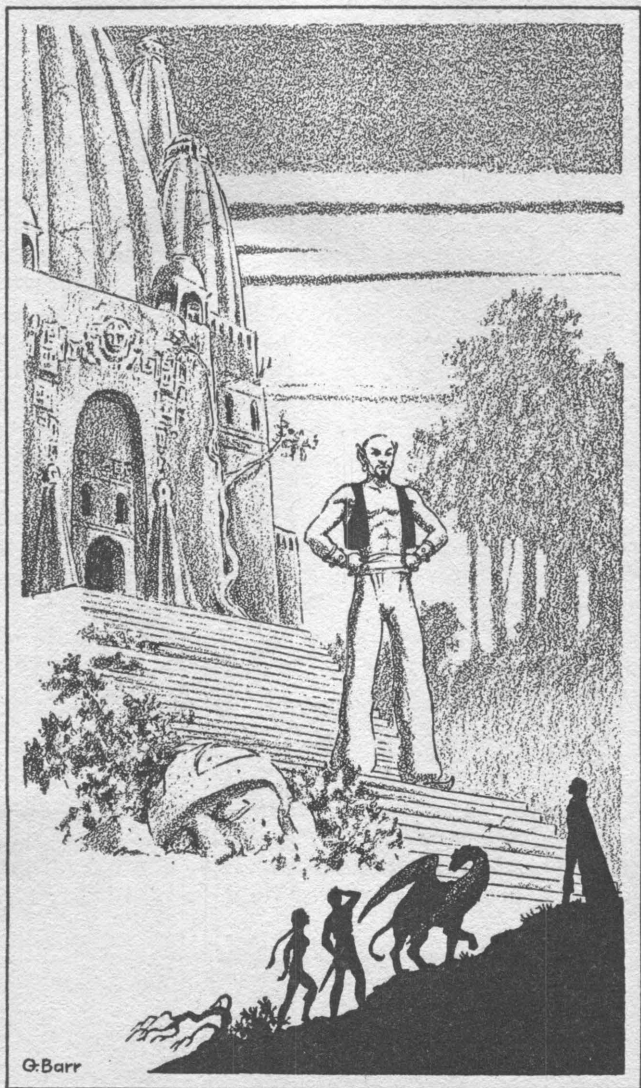
You glance at the shimmering blue wall behind you and start inching your way back toward it. Then you remember your weapons.

What will you do?

If you want to attack the lich with your enchanted staff and sleep darts, turn to **97**. If you wish to use the Sceptre of Bhukod, turn to **104**. If you’d rather just run through the energy field, turn to **126**.

Whatever your decision,
it will be only one of many you must make
in order to win the

CLASH OF THE SORCERERS



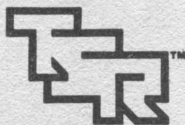
**An ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®
Adventure Gamebook #II**

Volume III in the KINGDOM OF SORCERY Trilogy

CLASH of the SORCERERS

By Morris Simon

**Cover Art by Keith Parkinson
Interior Art by George Barr**



**TSR, Inc.
PRODUCTS OF YOUR IMAGINATION™**

**To Sherry
for her endless patience during
this endless trilogy.**

CLASH OF THE SORCERERS

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Welcome, you who are about to engage in the **CLASH OF THE SORCERERS**, to an exciting, totally new concept in role-playing gamebooks.

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YOUR CHARACTER

CLASH OF THE SORCERERS concludes the exciting **KINGDOM OF SORCERY** trilogy, which consists of three separate volumes, each a complete adventure in itself. Throughout the trilogy, you play the role of Carr Delling, the son of Landor, the renowned Tikandian archmagus. As the trilogy has progressed, you have learned many of the powerful and complex spells willed to you by your father, Landor. Of course, your arch enemy, a rival wizard named Arno, has increased his powers, as well.

The first two adventures, **SCEPTRE OF POWER** and **THE SORCERER'S CROWN**, traced your emerging career as a magic-user of great distinction from your studies as a novice at College Arcane to your position as Senior Mage of that same school of magic on Seagate Island. Your rapid progress in wizardry was ensured when you recovered the famed Sceptre of Bhukod and Crown of Aerdrie, two magical treasures that your father discovered in the lost ruins of Bhukod, the ancient Tikandian empire ruled by sorcerer-kings.



At the end of the second book, **THE SORCERER'S CROWN**, you and your friends had driven Arno's evil demi-humans from Seagate Island. Arno now controls the entire continent of Tikandia through his relationship with Pazuzu, the prince of demons. The duel between you and Arno is at a stalemate because each of you now possesses one of the twin crowns that belong to Lolth, the drow queen, and Aerdrie, Lolth's sister.

CLASH OF THE SORCERERS begins about five years after you and your allies win Seagate Island from Arno. You've built a base of power on the island, from which you can raid the mainland and are preparing for an invasion to liberate your homeland from Arno's tyranny. The astral creatures that sometimes assist and defend you are powerless outside of their own realms. This means that you must face both Arno and his allies in Tikandia without the support of the solars and other astral creatures who helped you liberate Seagate Island. To compensate, you have been experimenting with powerful and dangerous spells far beyond your level of knowledge.

Your primary allies in the struggle against Arno's evil domination are Dalris, the daughter of your father's best friend, Archdruid Perth of Wealwood Grove; Thayne, your first tutor in magic and a reincarnated elf in a gnome's body; Garn, one of the original senior paladins in the Archclericy of Saven who managed to resist the mysterious corruption of the Order of Blessed Dyan; and Rufyl, the pseudodragon familiar willed to you by Landor.



PLAYING THE GAME

ESTABLISHING YOUR CHARACTER

YOUR Carr Delling will be different from someone else's because YOU help to create him.

Carefully tear out the removable Character Stats Card at the beginning of this book. This card is your record of Carr's character makeup. It also doubles as a bookmark.

Since you will probably be playing this adventure many times, we suggest that you write on the card lightly and in pencil only, so that your character stats can be erased easily. If you have access to a photocopier, you may wish to make photocopies of the Character Stats Card *only*. Another alternative is to reproduce the card on a 3" x 5" card or a slip of paper.

You are now ready to complete the individual identity of Carr Delling by establishing his strengths and weaknesses. Your character's name (Carr Delling) and character class (Magic-user) have already been entered for you. Before you fill out the rest of the card, it is necessary for you to understand the game's scoring system.

SCORING

Playing the game requires you to keep track of three things—**hit points**, **skill points**, and the **spells** you use during the adventure—on the **Character Stats Card** from the front of the book. An explanation of these three things follows.

HIT POINTS

As Carr Delling, you have a specific life strength, represented by **hit points**. Once your character's hit points are gone, he ceases to exist, and you have come to the end of your adventure, whether the text has come to an end or not.

You lose hit points when you are "hit" during physical or magical combat with an enemy, if a dangerous spell of your own fails, or if you encounter an accidental mishap. In such

cases, you will be instructed either to deduct a certain number of hit points from Carr's current total, or to roll a die or dice to determine how many hit points to subtract. Record all such deductions in pencil on your Character Stats Card.

You may be fortunate enough to gain hit points at certain places in the adventure. On these rare occasions, you either add a specified number of hit points or roll a die to determine how many hit points to add to your current total. The one rule you must remember when recovering lost hit points is that you can never have more hit points than you had at the start of your adventure.

Magic-users spend most of their time in musty studies, pouring over arcane tomes. They seldom exercise or eat properly. In this adventure, your physical strength has deteriorated greatly because of your dangerous magical research. A hip injury you suffered in a faulty teleportation experiment is so painful that you rely on healing spells, invisible servants, and other enchantments to do the things you need to do.

You begin this adventure with 4 hit points, plus the best three out of five die rolls. Simply roll a six-sided die five times and add the three highest scores to 4. Record both the adjustment and the total on the Character Stats Card where it reads "4 + ___ = ___."



SKILL POINTS

Skill points allow you to increase Carr's chances of success by adding the score for a specific skill to the dice roll. In this book, you start with a certain number of points in each of your two skills—**intelligence** (16) and **charisma** (10)—and have an additional 9 points to divide as you see fit, bearing in mind only the restrictions that follow.

Note that, without superior intelligence, a magic-user cannot master the arcane secrets of advanced sorcery. Thus, you must divide the extra 9 points so that your intelligence skill score is higher than your charisma skill score, yet you must add at least 2 of the 9 points to your charisma skill score.

The following explanations of each skill category may be helpful as you decide how to divide the extra points.

Intelligence

Because you are a magic-user, **intelligence** is your most important skill. It enables you to think through all aspects of a situation quickly and clearly, frequently while under great pressure. It also determines your ability to learn and use new magic spells, decipher ancient scrolls, recall magical formulas, and perform other mental tasks.

During the past five years, you have spent a lot of time working on your Permanency spell, an advanced incantation that allows you to cast a limited number of specific spells without risk of spell failure. Each time you choose to "activate" one of these spells, it will be available for immediate use—at the price of 1 intelligence point per permanent spell. The reasoning here is that you must reserve a tiny portion of your mind to keep that spell ready for instant casting. You'll want to be sparing in your selection of permanent spells, since *you may not need all of them*.

In this book, you use your intelligence by rolling two dice and adding the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total equals or exceeds the number required for success as written in the text, you are successful.

Charisma

Your **charisma** skill score will determine whether or not you can convince others to follow your advice, believe in you, or simply to "like" you. Naturally, your charisma will depend somewhat on how, when, why, and on whom, you use your powerful magic.

To use your charisma skill, roll two dice and add the result to your charisma skill score. If the total equals or exceeds the number given in the text, you are successful.

Unlike other **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®** Adventure Gamebooks, the **KINGDOM OF SORCERY** series allows your character to either grow or shrink in abilities each time an adventure is played. You may wish to add your final scores in intelligence and charisma to your remaining hit points each time you play **CLASH OF THE SORCERERS** in order to compare your success with that on previous occasions.



SPELLBOOKS & SPELLS

The entire adventure of CLASH OF THE SORCERERS takes place in one twenty-four hour period of game time. The events occur so quickly that there will be no time to re-study spells you've already used. The spells listed on the following page fall into three categories: Permanent (including both "Personal" and "Other"), Memorized, and Spellbook spells.

The ones in the "Permanent Personal" listing are those mentioned above that cost 1 intelligence point each the first time cast in a single adventure. These appear on your Character Stats Card. Note that Unseen Servant has been given to you as a free spell from the beginning. It is not necessary to use any kind of components with these spells. You will be given various opportunities to activate any of these spells you wish to cast permanently. Simply check each one in the "ACTIVE" space when you cast it.

"Memorized" spells may be cast in the usual manner, with the usual components and effects. You must always test these against your current intelligence skill score to see if they work.

The "Spellbook" category includes a few incantations that you were studying when the adventure began. You don't know the exact incantations for these spells, so you will have to read them from the pages of your travelling spellbook as if they were magical scrolls.

Once you use a spell in either the "Memorized" or "Spellbook" listings, that spell is used up until you begin the adventure again.

LIST OF SPELLS

PERMANENT Personal—Check when activated and deduct 1 point from intelligence skill score.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| — <i>Comprehend Languages</i> | — <i>Protection from Evil</i> |
| — <i>Detect evil</i> | — <i>Protection from Normal Missiles</i> |
| — <i>Detect Invisibility</i> | — <i>Read Magic</i> |
| — <i>Detect Magic</i> | — <i>Tongues</i> |
| — <i>Infravision</i> | <u>X</u> <i>Unseen Servant</i> |

PERMANENT Other—May be cast in the usual manner, once per adventure, but with permanent effects.

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Enlarge</i> | <i>Magic Mouth</i> |
| <i>Fear</i> | <i>Stinking Cloud</i> |
| <i>Gust of Wind</i> | <i>Wall of Fire</i> |
| <i>Wall of Force</i> | <i>Web</i> |

MEMORIZED—May be cast in the usual manner, once per adventure.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Charm Person</i> | <i>Wizard Lock</i> |
| <i>Burning Hands</i> | <i>Dispel Magic</i> |
| <i>Find Familiar</i> | <i>Fireball</i> |
| <i>Hold Portal</i> | <i>Fly</i> |
| <i>Light</i> | <i>Hold Person</i> |
| <i>Sleep</i> | <i>Suggestion</i> |
| <i>Spider Climb</i> | <i>Teleport</i> |
| <i>Knock</i> | <i>Hold Monster</i> |
| <i>Levitate</i> | <i>Polymorph Other</i> |

SPELLBOOK

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>Teleport without Error</i> | <i>Spiritwrack</i> |
| <i>Monster Summoning IV & V</i> | <i>Dismissal</i> |
| <i>Limited Wish</i> | |

WEAPONS

As Carr Delling, you are not a fighter. Hence, you wear no armor. You still carry the powerful Sceptre of Bhukod with you, though, and you are usually armed with an enchanted bronzewood quarterstaff, a nondescript dagger, and a supply of three darts tipped with a special Druid poison that paralyzes a victim instantly. Each dart may be used only once.

You've discarded the multicolored Deeppockets cloak of THE SORCERER'S CROWN in favor of a sombre gray Cloak of Elvenkind, which you wear almost constantly as a defensive weapon to make up for your loss of dexterity.



PLAYING WITHOUT DICE

Should you ever wish to play CLASH OF THE SORCERERS when dice are unavailable, all you need is a pencil and some paper. Simply write the numbers 1 through 6 on separate slips of paper and mix them up. Then draw one of the slips, note the number, and place it back with the rest. Each draw represents one roll of a die. If only one die is called for, draw only one number.

YOUR unique Carr Delling is now complete, and you are ready to begin another unforgettable and dangerous journey into the world of magic and sorcery. Use your spells wisely because there always seems to be a greater danger waiting on the next page. Turn to section 1 on page 15—and good luck!

The images in the scrying crystal are just as terrifying tonight as they were during the three other viewings. You've known for some time that you were on the verge of learning something vital about the collapse of the Bhukodian empire, but you could never have prepared yourself for the centuries-old scenes of horror and destruction now being replayed within a magical time crystal that lies on your polished desktop in the safety of your study.



You're watching the sorcerer-kings of ancient Bhukod sacrifice themselves to an insatiable tarrasque! The voracious giant saurian with the spiny shell and horns has ravaged the entire Bhukodian empire. But it has finally been lured into the marshes where the desperate wizard-kings are using their own bodies as bait to trap the invincible monster within an underground temple.

Tonight, their ultimate weapon is ready, but it will mean their own doom. The most renowned sorcerers of Tikandia have pooled their arcane knowledge to invest a simple gray robe with more power than any other single object in their

magic-dominated world. This "Robe of the Archmagi," as they call it, is to be worn by the senior magus himself as he casts their final spell—an impenetrable permanent Wizard's Lock on the only entrance to their Temple of Power.

You lean closer to study every detail of the last few minutes of their noble self-sacrifice, despite the sickening images of the tarrasque feeding upon the lesser wizards. The nameless archmagus has his arms outstretched and is speaking in ancient High Elvish, the language of Bhukodian sorceries. Just when you're beginning to understand some of his incantation, a loud clamor at your door breaks your concentration and causes the scene to fade.

"WHAT IS IT?" you bellow angrily. "I told you not to disturb me for any reason!"

"Open the door, Carr! I've just heard some news from Tikandia that changes everything!"

Even muffled by the thick door of your study, Dalris's voice sounds too strident to ignore. You sigh, trying to control your anger, and return the beclouded crystal to its midnight blue nest of velvet inside the polished wooden box.

"Carr! Can you hear me?" calls the bard.

You frown and focus the dweomer of your Unseen Servant spell on the door. The panel swings open. Dalris's deeply tanned face, streaked with sweat and dust, sneers as she sees you sitting behind the massive desk that belonged to your father, the great Archmagus Landor.

"Have you grown so lazy that you can't even open and close a door without magic?" she demands.

"Be quiet, Dalris!" you growl. "Your intrusion has just cost me two weeks of preparations and nearly four hundred gold pieces. What is this 'news' you bring? Is it just another barbarian folktale?"

The Kandian's dark eyes flash in anger, but she controls it long enough to give you her disturbing message. "One of my 'barbarian' refugees from Tikandia has just told me that Oram is dead. I thought you *might* want to know that piece of news, Magus Delling."

The insulted woman turns for the door without giving you time to ask questions. You may use your magic to stop her (14) or try to talk her into staying (31).

"Welcome to the heart of ancient Bhukod, son of Magus Landor!"

Even after eight years, you immediately recognize the voice of Shanif, the guardian marid of the Bhukodian ruins. Your infravision reveals the humanoid's form towering twelve feet above you, wrapped in an orange aura.

"I greet you, Shanif. Your familiar has told me disturbing news of Arno, the corrupt wizard who has taken control of the archclericy. Jarmel says that he may be seeking the Bhukodian temple."

"Foolish wizard! Don't you remember my psionic talents from the last time we met? Talk to me of the real reason you've come—the Robe of the Archmagi!"

You do recall Shanif's superior telepathic abilities and wish you hadn't tried to hide the main object of your quest. "It's true that I want to prevent Arno's discovery of the robe," you admit. "If he possesses the robe's powers in addition to his control of the demon Pazuzu . . ."

"PAZUZU? Don't you know yet, human, that the vile creature called Arno is Pazuzu's pet? The prince of the lower aerial kingdoms was using your rival for some puerile but sinister purpose, something involving the corruption of paladins, I believe. But things are getting out of hand now that the drow queen has become involved."

"Drow queen! Do you mean Lolth?"

"Do you know of another queen of the dark elves? Of course I mean Lolth! But I have no time for talk. I have been summoned to the astral plane to confer with Pazuzu himself about certain things, and I have been instructed by very high powers indeed to see that Landor's son guards the temple in my absence."

"What powers? Why are you meeting with Pazuzu?" For a moment you wonder if Shanif, too, has been corrupted.

"Behold!" booms Shanif, ignoring your questions and your thought. *"The famed temple of Bhukod, with the wizard-locked stone used by the last sorcerer-kings to seal the ravenous tarrasque within their sacrificial tomb!"* Shanif and his familiar move aside to let you see a pyramid of earth and a massive slab of granite wedged into an arch-

way of carved symbols, Your pulse quickens as you recognize some of the ancient Bhukodian hieroglyphics.

“‘Allow no one to touch that stone!’ Those were the words of your father, his last command to me before he vanished forever. And now I give the same order to you, Carr Delling. Remain hidden and do not attempt to undo the work of your father with spells of your own. I shall also see to it that no incantations of any kind can be uttered in my absence.”

With that final word, the marid’s huge body begins to dissolve into a vague, orangy haze. In seconds, both he and the opinicus have melted into the dawn mists.

“Shanif! Jarmell!” you shout, but no sound comes from your mouth. The marid has cast some kind of magical dweomer over the entire temple entrance, a dweomer that stifles all sound. The temple mound with its blocked arch looms before you now, its carved inscriptions becoming more legible in the morning light. You approach the entrance to the ruins, wanting to study every detail of the symbols, yet wondering what traps the Bhukodian sorcerers may have laid for anyone who tampers with the seal.

You’re bursting with curiosity as you try to imagine how to unlock the lost secrets of Bhukod. You might try to read the inscription first (10), or even try to enter the temple (23). Of course, you may wish to obey the marid’s command and merely watch the entrance until he returns (27).



3

“Go below and fetch the bard and Sir Garn,” you command. “Bring them to the quarterdeck at once.”

The sailor salutes you crisply and rushes to do your bidding. You barely notice the injured muscles of your hip as

you hasten toward the quarterdeck. The paladin and Dalris soon join you there.

"Did he give you Thayne's message?" you ask them.

"Yes," Garn replies. "I've just been explaining to Dalris that surprise is our best tactic. If we send scouts and they're caught, it'll give away our entire invasion. We can't afford to let that happen."

"We can't afford *not* to send scouts!" Dalris objects. "We don't know exactly where we are on the coast. There are bogs and mires along this shore that would swallow every man and horse aboard this vessel. In darkness like this, we can't risk a beach landing."

If you agree with Dalris and want to scout the shore, turn to 113. If you'd rather not take a chance on warning the enemy by sending scouts, turn to 128.

4

The sun has scarcely set when Thayne's rangers and Garn's knights join Dalris's small band of barbarian warriors on the docks at Freeton, the main port of Seagate Island. As you arranged, two huge war galleys suddenly appear at the merchant wharves. The waterfront buzzes with gossip as the sailors fill the heavily armored ships with horses, equipment, and men. In less than two hours, the twin vessels are sailing northward, heading directly across Pirates' Alley for the port of Saven.

Thayne's large contingent of elven rangers is packed into one ship, while Garn's knights and Dalris's Kandians are crowded on the other with you. Because your plan requires the knights to lead the assault on Saven, Garn is commanding the entire operation from the quarterdeck. Dalris is busy organizing her bold but undisciplined force of Kandian irregulars. With concealed pleasure, you watch her lithe figure crisscross the deck as she relays details of the invasion plans to the other Kandian leaders.

"Carr! Can you come up here?" calls Garn.

You look toward the quarterdeck, where Garn is standing next to his pilot at the wheel. Your hip dislocation is hurting because of the moist sea air, so you have to use your enchanted bronzewood staff as a crutch to climb the gangway.

You try to hide the pain as you reach Garn's side. He frowns and points to your leg.

"Do you want me to do something for that hip?" he asks with serious concern in his voice.

Paladins may practice limited healing powers once a day, and Garn has relieved this same pain on previous occasions. But he may need these powers later. If you want him to use his Heal Wounds spell, turn to 50. If not, turn to 103.

5

As you move along the path designated by the glowing Sceptre of Bhukod, you suddenly become aware that your Detect Evil dweomer is revealing the presence of an evil aura somewhere in your vicinity. You move more slowly, picking your way among the loose rocks at the edge of Yellow Marsh. Then you spot it. It's a circular slab of stone, perhaps four feet in diameter, with a dark crevice along its edge.

You wedge a toe beneath the slab, lift it, and shove it to one side. Then you peer into a moss-lined, vertical shaft that quickly sinks beyond your sight into darkness. The distinctive odor of rotting flesh assaults your nostrils, making you momentarily back away from the opening.

Ignoring the fumes, you pull the sceptre out of its pack and use its light to try to see to the bottom, but the shaft curves out of sight, toward the marsh. You notice, however, that the sceptre's intense glow remains constant as you poke it into the opening.

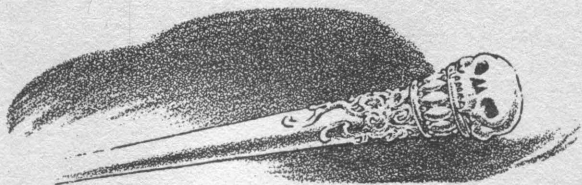
If you want to climb down the shaft, turn to 70. If you'd rather resume your search in the direction indicated by the brightening of the sceptre, turn to 96.

6

Arno still seems to be paying no attention to you. Instead, he raises both hands. In one, he holds an enchanted mace and in the other an unfurled parchment scroll. He seems to be staring at something over your head, possibly the inscriptions on the arch. You turn to see if that's the case just at the moment he finishes reading his powerful Disintegrate scroll.

The granite boulder blocking the temple entrance suddenly explodes, propelling you nearly twenty feet through the air to land unconscious at the base of a large tree.

Turn to 152.



7

The opinicus's simian eyes squint with worry. *"My master must travel to the astral plane to confer with the demon prince, Pazuzu. I am to take you to the entrance to the Temple of Power so that you may guard it in Lord Shanif's absence. He told me that you would understand both the dangers and the reasons for such precautions."*

"It's Arno!" you mutter. "He's using Pazuzu to draw Shanif away from the temple so he can get into the ruins!"

"Your reasoning is excellent, son of Landor," the opinicus projects. *"Lord Shanif did indeed mention an evil being called Arno who serves both the Spider Queen and Prince Pazuzu. Could this be the same creature?"*

"'Spider Queen?'" interjects Thayne. "Do you mean that Arno's involved with Lolth, the evil drow queen? Things are getting complicated here!"

"You must contain your confusion a while longer, Thayne of Seagate. I know too little of these human foibles to advise you. I do recall Lord Shanif's amusement when the drow priestess cast her Continual Light over the harbor to attract the olhydra."

The opinicus's words leave you so astonished that you can hardly speak. Things are beginning to become clearer to you about Arno's sources of power, and you're anxious to speak with Shanif about several matters, including his "conference" with Pazuzu.

"We must see Shanif at once," you command the marid's familiar. "Show us the way!"

"Alas, I cannot," thinks the beast. "Lord Shanif must leave immediately for his meeting with Pazuzu. That is why he insisted that I bring you by way of dimensional travel. Unfortunately, I am able to take but one person, and that person must be you, Carr Delling, son of Landor. If you do not go with me, you will have to find the temple for yourself—and it may be too late by then."

If you decide to go with the opinicus, turn to 42. If you prefer not to take a chance, turn to 48.

8

"They say 'New plan agreed. Suggest Delling accompany first boats to check for surprises'," reports the sailor.

You smile at Thayne's reply—courageous and cautious at the same time. You know that your permanent ability to Detect Magic could warn the elves of any magical traps.

"Tell them to start lowering their dinghies," you order the signalman. "I'll join them halfway between the ships."

Without waiting for the sailor to transmit your reply, you hurry to find Garn to tell him of the elf's agreement. Dalris joins you just as you're repeating Thayne's request to the paladin.

"Surely you would want to save your talents for something a little more challenging," Dalris quips.

"On the contrary, I think it's the wisest thing to do just now," you reply. "It's difficult to know what to expect from someone like Arno."

The Kandian woman's sarcastic smile fades. She points to one of the small lifeboats lashed to the rail and taps Garn on the arm.

"Help me get that skiff into the sea," she asks the paladin. "I'm going with him. He's too weak to do this by himself. Just give us some oarsmen and a crossbow."

"This isn't necessary," you protest gruffly, secretly pleased at Dalris's concern. "Rufyl and I can handle this well enough without—"

"She's right, Carr," interrupts Garn. "What's more, I'm going too. You just get Rufyl into the boat. We'll top the horizon in less than an hour."

Add 1 point to your charisma skill score, then turn to 16.



A quick glance at the list of spell components you need for the invasion convinces you that you can't wait until morning for Rufyl to begin collecting them. Some of the magical ingredients are so rare that even the resourceful pseudodragon may fail to find them in time. You open the center drawer of your desk and remove a tiny charcoal brazier seated in a wooden cradle to protect the desktop from its heat.

It's a miniature cauldron, just like the one you used for the Find Familiar spell that brought Rufyl to you in the first place. You fashioned it out of the original, larger one so that you can use it to summon Rufyl whenever you need him. You unwrap the folded leather pouch, removing the charcoal pellet, herbs, and oil of roses you need to cast the spell.

After you light the bit of charcoal, you wait until it's covered with a fine gray ash and then add the herbs, murmuring the same Elvish formula with each ingredient. Finally, you sprinkle exactly nine drops of rose oil onto the smoldering pellet. A profusion of fragrant pink smoke rises instantly into the air above your desk.

The stream of rose-tinted smoke curls back upon itself, rolling and swirling into a hazy form on top of the desk. Your concentration intensifies, hastening the materialization of the pseudodragon familiar willed to you by your father. The creature's scaly body is wound into a tight russet ball, his tail wrapped over his snout and miniscule wings. The magical smoke has scarcely settled when you poke the familiar in his ribs with a finger.

"Wake yourself, Rufyl. There's work to be done!"

The little animal stirs, unfurling his spiny tail with its

dangerous stinger. He lifts his head and cocks open one tired eye.

"Do you never sleep, Master? Must you always summon me in the dead of night?" The telepathic complaint conveys a sense of grumbling irritation to your mind. Rufyl's great age has taken its toll on his stamina, and lately he had found it difficult to adjust to your irregular work habits.

"The quiet of night is the best time for sorcery," you remind the beast. "Interruptions can be disastrous when you're preparing advanced spells. Now, I need you to collect the components for some of my father's more powerful formulas."

"Which ones?" he asks quickly, suddenly very alert. Despite Rufyl's token complaints, his long service to Landor and to you has filled him with a fascination for the occult second only to your own.

"These," you reply. Then you scan the list you've made, sending the word for each item to the familiar by telepathy. When you reach the end of the list, Rufyl sends you a mental note of disbelief.

"Some of these things no longer exist, Master!"

"Just do the best you can. That's why I woke you, so that you'll have the rest of the night and tomorrow to seek them. Now go. I must prepare my incantations to help the invasion."

The pseudodragon hops to the floor, activating his chameleon-like skill as he does. By the time he reaches the door, the little beast has blended so perfectly with the walls and floor around him that he's almost invisible. You will the Unseen Servant to open the door for him. As it closes behind your familiar, you turn to your bookshelves to prepare your spells.

Landor's secret scrawl is so familiar to your eyes after more than a dozen years of studying his archives that you read it as easily as a book written in modern Common. You quickly locate the obscure reference you remember and reach for the teapot to fill your cup. It promises to be a long night.

If you've already met with all three of your companions (Dalris, Thayne and Garn), turn to 157; if not, turn to 62.

The carved archway is like a magnet drawing you to its ancient symbols. From your long years as a student and master of magic at College Arcane, you know that inscriptions such as these are often dangerous. Before you begin deciphering the secret characters, you check the stonework for signs of physical traps.

Seeing nothing unusual, you try to decide which of your permanent spells would best help you read the inscription on the carved archway. If you have activated any of the following spells, you may use them in whatever order you choose: Comprehend Languages (153), Detect Magic (90), or Detect Evil (199).

Select your first spell and turn to the indicated section. If you have not activated any of these three spells, turn to 39.



Watching Arno as he studies the archway makes you wish you could have prepared a stronger defensive spell for your confrontation. You can activate Protection from Evil and Protection from Normal Missiles, of course, but that will sap some of the magical strength that you'll no doubt need to cast other spells. You can always use the Sceptre of Bhukod, as long as it has a charge left in it.

If you choose to activate your Protection from Evil and/or Protection from Normal Missiles spells, be sure check to them "Active" on your List of Spells. Deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score for each one you choose to use, and turn to 6.

If you want to use the Sceptre of Bhukod against Arno, turn to 24.

12

You quickly reach inside your Cloak of Elvenkind for one of the tiny balls of sulphur-guano mixture you need to cast the Fireball spell, but Arno is expecting the movement.

"*Ruspal!*" he shouts, sending five bullet-shaped missiles of pure energy straight for your head.

Roll 2 dice. If your permanent Protection from Evil spell is active, subtract 2 from the result. Either way, deduct the adjusted result from your current hit points for a new hit-point total and turn to 152—if you're still alive, that is!

13

"Arno's men won't be expecting anyone to land in the marsh," you suggest. "We can then circle behind them and attack from the rear when the galleys land."

In the back of your mind, you're thinking of another objective which has nothing to do with the invasion—your race with Arno to enter the ancient temple of Bhukod. You sense a flurry of thoughts from Rufyl as he intercepts your underlying plans and realizes where he is.

"*Calm yourself. There'll be plenty of time to worry when we face Arno and Pazuzu,*" you project to the frightened beast.

"You're on your own in the marsh," Dalris says in a low voice. "I can't guide you once we're past Citadel Rock. I might remind you that Yellow Marsh is such a dangerous place that even the most experienced rangers of Wealwood avoid entering it at night."

"Thanks," you say grimly. You've studied the terrifying accounts of travelers who survived the perils of Yellow Marsh and wrote about them and don't need reminding. The dinghy drifts closer to the dense shadows of the marsh. You can smell the rotten, fetid air of the swamp, odors of death and decay, all around you. The black mass of Citadel Rock looms even more darkly than before and towers above you. Dalris guides the boat into a cove on its western side, and Thayne leaps onto the muddy ground to drag the small craft out of the water.

Garn and Dalris are already examining the soft ground for signs of a trail that might lead around Citadel Rock to

the east. Suddenly a loud splash to your left startles everyone. Your infravision reveals a large winged creature materializing from nothing only a few feet from Garn and Dalris!

If your Detect Evil spell is active, turn to 73. If it isn't, continue in 45.



14

You murmur a quick command and the Unseen Servant dweomer bolts the door just as Dalris reaches for the handle. She whirls around with fury gleaming in her black Kandian eyes, contrasting starkly with the tired features on her grimy face.

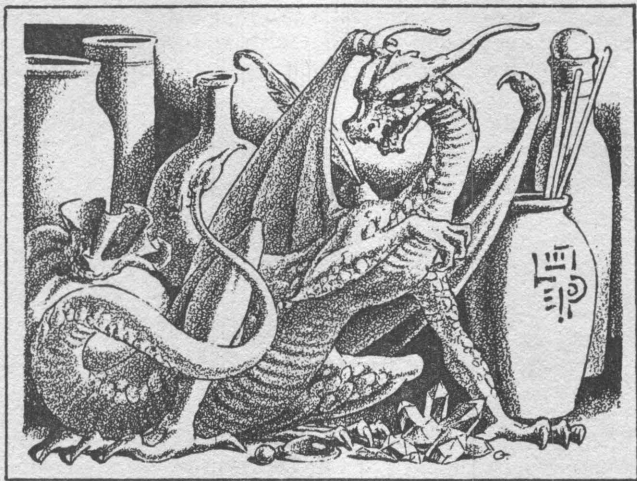
"What's this, Delling?" she demands. "Flexing your magical muscles at me? Is that supposed to impress me?"

"No, Dalris, only to stop you long enough for me to hear the rest of what you came to tell. Surely there's more to your story than news of Archcleric Oram's death."

The bard squints at your sullen expression, then approaches the desk with the wary confidence of a stalking huntress. She stops a few feet from you, glowering at you and pointing into your face.

"You listen, and listen well, Carr Delling," she says in a coarse whisper. "Wield your magic on someone else! I can see what it's done to you, and I don't want any part of it! Look at yourself! Your eyes have sunk into your face and you're a cripple. You may have learned a lot of magic in the past ten years, but you're just a shell of the man I met on Seagate Island. You disgust me, Delling, and your tricks disgust me even more!"

You stare in hurt silence at the only woman you've ever wanted but could not have. The bard's wild Kandian



beauty has seemed even more enticing as she has become cooler and more distant. Her work among the underground barbarian resistance has made her even more fiercely independent than before. Ironically, the same inner intensity which attracts you to her also alienates her from you.

"Your feelings toward me have nothing to do with matters at hand," you tell her, forcing the hurt into a distant corner of your mind. "Finish your story, and then you may leave. We must work together now more than ever. As much as you may despise my magic, we must rely upon it to defeat Arno and his 'Knights of Truth'."

Deduct 1 point from your charisma skill score and turn to 40.

15

You stoop in a daze, peering into the dusty black hole between the inscribed arches. Like a baby duckling intent upon following the first creature it sees, you begin to go in the archway after the dark man with the strange white hair, but then a strong command in your brain stops you.

"DO NOT ENTER THE TEMPLE!"

You turn with a puzzled look, only to face an even more puzzling creature standing at the arch. It's a large camel-like thing with brownish gold wings, a lion's mane on its long neck, and a monkey's head. Its face wears a stern expression.

"Do I know you?" you ask the strange beast.

"*Not now, but I'll soon fix that,*" the thing replies directly into your brain. "*You're in no condition to go after your enemy in the lair of the tarrasque!*"

"Enemy? Tarrasque? I don't know what you mean."

"*Your mind has been exposed to a powerful Forget spell, and your memory of recent events is gone. I shall try to repair that damage.*"

The animal's simian eyelids shut for just an instant. At that moment, you feel a sudden explosion of thoughts and memories inside your head, as if they had burst through some kind of mental barrier.

When the confusing barrage of images settles, you recognize Jarmel, the marid's opinicus familiar. Roll 1 die and add the result to your intelligence skill score, but do not exceed your original score when you began the adventure. Arno's Forget spell wiped your slate of personal spells completely clean, but you may now select any permanent personal spells that you think might help you against Arno and the tarrasque. You *must* choose Infravision, and Unseen Servant is free.

Comprehend Languages

Detect Evil

Detect Invisibility

Detect Magic

Protection from Evil

Protection from Normal

Missiles

Read Magic

Tongues

Mark each spell you select as "Active" on your List of Spells. Remember to deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score for each newly activated spell, including Infravision. Then turn to 49.

16

The two sailors are expert oarsmen. They pull strongly and steadily on the heavy wooden shafts while Dalris handles the tiller with a practiced hand. You sit silently in the

stern, watching the oars slip through the still, black sea.

"This is most unpleasant, Master," complains Rufyl. The nervous pseudodragon is nearly invisible with fear, crouched between your feet and the gunwale. He doesn't appreciate small boats.

"Not as unpleasant as it's going to be," you reply wordlessly. *"This is the safest part of the invasion."*

You peer into the blackness, trying to see Thayne's boats. The ships were less than a hundred yards apart when you began rowing toward each other, but you still can't see any of the dinghies from the elf's vessel approaching.

"Perhaps your infravision would help," suggests Rufyl, who has eavesdropped upon your thoughts.

You smile at the familiar, whose own infravision is natural. Yours costs some concentration, which can interfere with spellcasting. Still, this may a good time to activate your Infravision spell.

If you wish to cast Infravision, mark it "Active" on your List of Spells and turn to 78. If you'd rather not use it just yet, turn to 55.



17

The unbroken Wizard Lock seal on the temple archway makes you even more curious about your father's expeditions into the ancient ruins. You're sure that neither Landor nor anyone else has ever removed the ancient enchantment. Suddenly the answer seems all too obvious: your father used one of his special spells that you've never learned to enter the temple!

You pull your traveling spellbook from beneath your cloak and hurriedly study the titles of Landor's major incantations. The ones called Teleport without Error and Limited Wish sound promising, so you scan the encoded de-

scriptions for both of them. You notice that Teleport without Error requires you to state precisely where you wish to go, but Limited Wish can be used in a more general way.

Satisfied that the Limited Wish spell will take you safely inside the Bhukodian temple, you tear out the single parchment leaf and return the book to its hidden pocket. Then you face the archway and begin to read the dangerous incantation slowly and distinctly. You pause when the spell demands the substitution of your own wish for the model in the formula.

"Hear my desire, forces of the nether planes! I wish to find . . .

(a) Landor's secret entrance to the ruins." (94)

(b) the tomb of the tarrasque." (203)

(c) the Robe of the Archmagi." (99)

At the instant you complete the incantation, the parchment bursts into smokeless, heatless flame and turns into a fine white ash in your hands. Your vision begins to blur. It seems as if you're standing perfectly still in a spinning bottle the curved sides of which are the trees, sky, and stone archway. The images are soon so blurred that you recognize nothing, but then the spinning slows down and you are in a very different place.

Note which of the three "wishes" you used to complete the incantation. Then turn to the appropriate section.

18

As soon as you utter the last word of the Gust of Wind spell, a light breeze begins to blow, making the rigging rattle and shaking a few sails, but nothing else happens. The dweomer is just not strong enough to fill the sails of one ship, let alone two.

"Some wizard!"

"You think we'll be able to handle her?"

"Typhoon! Typhoon! Batten the hatches!"

Though they irritate you, the jeers of the mariners are not as embarrassing as Dalris's look when you have to admit that you were wrong.

Deduct 1 point from your charisma for acting like such an ass. Then turn to 122.

19

Dalris and Garn are already at the dock in the port of Freeton when you and Rufyl arrive. The moist sea air is getting cooler with the approach of autumn, and your hip injury sends out shooting pains with each step you take. You gratefully use the support of your enchanted bronze-wood staff as you climb the gangplank to the deck of the armored galley.

"A warship all to ourselves!" you say to Garn, smiling.

"You know, you look like a monk," says the paladin.

He gestures toward the nondescript gray cloak with its cowl drawn over your head. It's actually a rare Cloak of Elvenkind which once belonged to a prominent Seagate thief. Slung over your shoulder is a long sheath of soft fur containing the fabled Sceptre of Bhukod. You're not exactly sure of the number of charges remaining in the powerful wand, but you want to take it to the temple where it was made to learn more about its manufacture.

"Have you seen Thayne?" asks Dalris. "He said he'd be here by sundown."

"It's not dark enough yet," you suggest. "The light hurts his eyes, even with the mica goggles I made for him. Be patient, he'll be here."

"While we're waiting, would you like for me to do something about that leg of yours?" asks Garn, concern in his voice. The kind paladin often uses his Heal Wounds spell to relieve your pain, but he can only perform this clerical spell once a day.

If you want him to heal you now, knowing that you have lots of action ahead, turn to 50. If you think Garn should keep his spell for a better cause, continue at 103.

20

Until now, you have been unable to pinpoint the source of Arno's strength—why he has repeatedly been able to defeat you in so many magical clashes. The combination of his spells and the dweomer of Lolth's crown outweigh that of the weakened Sceptre of Bhukod and your incantations. If you're to win the Robe of the Archmagi, you must obtain the Crown of Aerdrie to neutralize the Crown of Lolth!

Thayne! you say to yourself. He's the answer to all of this, and he's got the Sorcerer's Crown with him!

You need to find your companions immediately so that you can convince them to give you Aerdrie's crown. You wonder frantically how to get a message to them; then you remember Rufyl. You focus all of your failing strength on the pseudodragon, hoping that he will be near enough to respond.

"Master! Is it really you?"

Your familiar's telepathic voice is music to your brain. You rapidly explain what you want him to do. Then you sit down to rest and wait.

Some time passes and you hear boots running on the stone floor toward the room with the blue curtain of light.

If the tarrasque is dead, turn to 202. If it's alive, turn to 170.

21

You know that Garn's paladins and Thayne's rangers are impatient. They've been waiting for the invasion of Tikandia for more than ten years and would not be willing to postpone it.

"I think the invasion should proceed as planned," you tell your companions, "but without us."

The silence in your study is thick for several seconds while your words have their impact upon them.

"What did you say?" demands Dalris, fire sparking angrily in her voice and eyes.

"He says we shouldn't go with our men!" snorts Thayne, smiling at the bard's hot temper.

Garn is so shocked by your suggestion that he can just stare at you with his mouth gaping half-open in surprise.

"You're even more of a coward than I thought!" Dalris blurts, leaping to her feet and looking down at your calm expression. Her face is flushed with rage beneath her deep tan. "If you think we're going to sit here safely, protected by Aerdrie's crown while the bravest warriors on Seagate die to save Tikandia from YOUR enemy—"

"That's not what I said!" you bellow to drown out the excited woman. She blinks, unaccustomed to such outbursts

from you. Thayne and Garn look puzzled as they wait for your explanation.

The bard's accusations hurt, but you know that your other companions, too, are suspicious of your motives. You must tell them something to convince them to accompany you to the ruins while the Seagate force is invading the mainland. You can tell them what you learned about the Robe of the Archmagi (69). However, Dalris, as usual, may take your motives amiss, so maybe you should invent a fictitious reason (88)? Of course, you could always use your Suggestion spell to convince them that anything you suggest is right (101).

22

"We can work our way around Citadel Rock until we get to the sand, and then slip through the darkness between the rock and the forest. There's thick brush growing all along there, and we'll have plenty of cover," says Dalris.

The bard's memory is good. Just as she described, Citadel Rock's massive wall rises abruptly from the sandy ground right at the water's edge and runs inland for more than a hundred yards. The base of the giant black boulder is hidden by a thick row of wild shrubs that continues as far as you can see. The flames of the first campfire show only fifty or sixty feet away from the wall, but twice as far as that from the water.

While you and Thayne hide the dinghy in the shadows, Garn watches the shadowy figures at the campfire. "Abominable creatures!" he mutters beneath his breath.

"What did you say?" whispers Dalris.

"He's sensing the air for evil," Thayne replies softly, "and I do think he's found it."

"By Blessed Dyan, I've seldom encountered such abject depravity!" swears the paladin. "The atrocities those vile creatures have committed have tainted this entire coastline with an evil aura!"

"Half-orcs, I think," murmurs Dalris in a detached whisper. "Arno uses them on the coast because they hate humans and make good guards. We've tried to bribe them, but their racial hatred runs even deeper than gold. Those evil

creatures enjoy torturing humans more than killing them, and that's saying a lot!"

"My best shot would be to use my Stinking Cloud spell," you tell them. "If I cast it correctly just before the ships land, every guard in the vicinity of Citadel Rock will be too sick to fight when our forces hit the beach."

Dalris looks at you and starts to say something, but she visibly bites her tongue and turns away.

You creep around the massive black Citadel Rock until you judge that you are in just the correct position, then you leap out of the shadows shouting the spellword, "*Fug-gonrog!*"

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 27 or more, turn to 33. If it is less than 27, turn to 115.



23

The temptation to try to open the sealed archway is too great to resist. You approach the entrance to the Bhukodian temple and examine the crevice where the boulder is wedged into the arch. It's such a perfect fit that the boulder would seem to have been hewn from solid granite just for this purpose. You wish fleetingly that Dalris were here to check the blocked archway for traps with her expert knowledge of such things.

Seeing nothing unusual, you run through the list of your permanent personal spells, hoping to find one you might be able to use to gain entrance to the lost temple. The only personal incantations that might be useful here are Detect Evil, Protection from Evil, or Detect Magic. While none of these spells will help you move the boulder, any might pro-

tect you from whatever ancient dangers or traps may be set to guard the temple.

If you wish to cast one of these protective or detection spells, simply mark it "active" on your List of Spells and deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score for each one you select.

The regular spells you've memorized for the confrontation with Arno include Dispel Magic (179), Fireball (191), and Knock (82), all of which you've used before to open wizard-locked portals of various kinds. You might wish to try one of them on the blocked archway, or you might be able to enter the temple by using a more powerful incantation such as Teleport (166), Limited Wish (111), or Teleport without Error (186).

Choose any one of these spells, as long as you have not used it yet. Cross it off your List of Spells and turn to the section indicated.

24

Recalling the power-draining effects of the Sceptre of Bhukod upon both Thayne and your Uncle Beldon, you decide that it would be wiser to use the sceptre than a spell to defend yourself against Arno. You flip back the hood of the Cloak of Elvenkind and stand squarely in front of the temple entrance with the sceptre raised high.

"Through me first, Arno!" you shout.

The dark wizard scowls when he sees the Sceptre of Bhukod's glowing tip because it means that the weapon still has at least one charge left in it. He too remembers Beldon's last days at College Arcane, and doesn't want to risk a confrontation with the might of the sceptre.

Arno removes a scroll from his robe and begins to chant its contents in a lilting High Elvish dialect. It takes you a few seconds to become accustomed to the language, but you recognize the incantation as a Disintegration spell. The half-drow is trying to destroy the granite slab that barricades the Temple of Power!

Suddenly, a tremendous explosion from behind slams you to the ground. Rocks ranging in size from pebbles to small boulders rain upon you. Turn to 152.

"I don't like that light," you tell Thayne and the others. "There's something strange about it."

"I agree," adds the former elven wizard. "It's bigger than any Continual Light dweomer I've ever seen. It must have taken a lot of magical energy to hang that thing in the sky."

After a few seconds of silence, Dalris asks the inescapable question. "Can we land the galleys?"

You glance at Thayne's frowning gnomish features and shake your head. "They'd see us two miles away and have every soldier in Saven waiting for us. I think the best we can do is to slip some rangers into town by the shadows on the fringe of the spell. Maybe we can figure out what to do about the light."

"Some rangers?" Dalris asks. "How many?"

"As many as we can get in the dinghies," Garn replies, "and that probably means just the ones we have in the water right now."

You do a hasty calculation in your head. "That's only about forty—forty-six, counting us. It's not much of an invasion, but it'll have to do."

Thayne mutters some quick phrases in his mountain Elvish dialect, giving orders to the other boats, while one of your sailors flashes your decision to your galley.

You have a few moments to decide which, if any, of your inactive permanent spells you want to activate for the invasion. You might consider some of the following:

Protection from Evil *Detect Evil*

Protection from Normal *Infravision*

Missiles

Detect Invisibility

Detect Magic

Mark each of your selections as "Active" on your List of Spells, and deduct 1 point from your current intelligence skill score for each spell you activate.

Continue reading at 110.

The familiar cramping begins in your wrists and ankles as the skin and muscle cells start to change. You're already reaching for the black wall of rock when your palms and

soles start oozing the sticky secretions of the Spider Climb dweomer.

"Work your way around the rock and wait for my signal," you tell your three companions. "I'll try to call Rufyl by telepathy when it's time to move." Then you press your hands against the rough vertical surface and pull yourself from the dinghy.

Your palms and soles adhere firmly to the wall. You move rapidly, wanting to finish the climb before the spell's dweomer begins to weaken. You quickly pull yourself over the rim of the boulder and stand on top of the rock, taking a final glance at the diminished figures in the dinghy.

Citadel Rock is a flat expanse of black basalt, blending in the distance with the dark horizon. The campfires of Arno's guards are clearly visible from this height, stretching toward the east in an irregular line as far as you can see. To your left, the bleak terrain of Yellow Marsh remains blanketed by a dense fog.

From the east rim of Citadel Rock, you see that you're directly above the nearest campfire. From your vantage point, you can see Dalris and Thayne leading Garn and Rufyl along a path against the side of the rock. Then you see six of the guards from the campfire walking straight toward your unsuspecting friends! The only way you might help them quickly is to use your Fly spell to reach the ground between them and the guards.

Cross Fly off your List of Spells. Then roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 28 or more, turn to **146**. If it is less than 28, turn to **85**.

27

Even though one of your spells might be powerful enough to dispel or shatter the ancient seal on the "tomb of the tarasque," you decide not to risk such a dangerous experiment. You don't know what powerful force controls the marid, but it was very specific about "the son of Landor" taking Shanif's place. You only wonder if the marid can be trusted!

You pull the thick Cloak of Elvenkind over your head and whisper its soft command word. The garment's invisibility

dweomer activates instantly, covering you with an illusion of transparency. Satisfied that your cloak will hide you from would-be thieves, you prop your back against the side of the earthen pyramid.

You may take this moment of quiet to activate whichever of your permanent spells you think would be useful in the next several hours:

Comprehend Languages

Protection from Evil

Detect Evil

Protection from Normal

Missiles

Detect Invisibility

Read Magic

Detect Magic

Tongues

Mark each spell you select as "Active" on your List of Spells. Remember to deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score for each newly activated spell. Then turn to 198.



28

The tarrasque doesn't appear to be following you, but it has had centuries to learn every path in the temple, so you advance slowly, senses on the alert for movement. You want to find the Robe of the Archmagus. And you know you won't find it if the tarrasque finds you first.

Ahead, you see a blue glow, and you hear the sound of someone incanting a spell, muffled by the clicking of giant claws against a stone floor. Arno! Arno must be here—facing the tarrasque.

Turn to 168.

29

"It said, 'Suggest we scout harbor lights at safe distance,'" reports the signalman.

Thayne's cautious logic makes you grin. You return to the quarterdeck where Garn and Dalris are waiting to hear the elf's answer. When you repeat it for them, the paladin frowns.

"I thought of that but decided it wouldn't work," he declares. "If we get close enough to see any detail with a spyglass, they'll be able to see us, too!"

"How about some of that famous magic of yours, Dell-ing?" mocks Dalris. "Whip out your crystal ball and find out for us what's going on in the harbor!"

The bard is being facetious, but she gives you an idea. It might be dangerous, but you could use your Fly (44) spell to get close enough to the Saven waterfront to spy on the source of the lights. Then again, it might be better simply to wait until you're close enough to use a spyglass (95).

30

You scour the Wealwood boundary for at least thirty minutes, seeing nothing special, until you reach the coastal road. You peer cautiously from the bushes at the edge of the highway, looking for signs of Arno's Knights of Truth but see no one.

When you step out onto the hard clay surface, however, a familiar mental voice pops into your mind only moments before Shanif's opinitus familiar materializes in front of you. Turn to 49.

31

"Dalris! Wait!" you call after the angry woman, but she has already sped from the study.

You stifle an impulse to use your Unseen Servant to stop her, deciding to do it yourself. You push away from the heavy desk and lift yourself painfully from the leather chair. Each step is a painful reminder of the price you've paid to take your father's place as master of College Arcane. Your body has been ravaged by many years of magical experimentation and the physical costs of such powerful knowledge.

By the time you reach the door, the barbarian woman is already on the next landing below you, in the College Ar-

cane dining hall. Your ivory robe with its coded mystical symbols embroidered in threads of pure gold and silver is so long that you stumble on its hem before you manage to lift it in your hasty descent on the stairs. The spiral of the stairwell makes only three-quarters of a turn before it opens into the main dining hall, but you don't need to go any further.

Dalris has stopped and is watching your labored movements on the steps with a softening expression. She raises one muddy hand and motions for you to wait.

"Go back upstairs, Carr," she says softly. "I'll be there in a few minutes. I want to wash some of this muck off my face and hands."

You watch as she vanishes toward the kitchen, then you stumble back to your study and collapse in the comfortable chair. Dalris returns quickly, with a scrubbed face, a steaming pot of tea, and some mugs.

"You've let yourself go again, Carr," she says grimly as she pours the hot stimulant laced with honey into one of the cups and hands it to you. You glower and start to speak, but she silences you with a toss of her long black battle-queue. "I'm not going to nag you. Drink the tea and listen. We don't have time for arguments. Archcleric Oram is dead, and Arno now has complete control of the Cleric's paladins."

"EX-paladins," you mutter between sips of the delicious hot beverage. You dislike admitting that the Kandian is right, but you do forget to take care of yourself when engaged in special research such as that with the time crystal. The tea is making your stomach remember how hungry you are.

"It doesn't matter what the Knights of Truth call themselves, or what we call them," Dalris replies. "They're still evil and they serve darker forces than Tikandia has ever known before."

You frown over the steaming mug at the bard's fiery expression. "Those are things we know very little about," you remind her. "The sources of a wizard's power are never so easy to identify. I'm not convinced that the demon called Pazuzu—"

"Save the lecture for one of your students," she interrupts. "Whatever its source may be, Arno's malevolent power extends throughout my homeland!"

You study the look of tired fury in the bard's tanned face. Her battle-braid, the mark of a Kandian warrior, is caked with the same reddish dust that stained her face and hands. You recognize it as the red clay of the hills near Wealwood, the traditional shrine of Archdruid Perth, her father and your friend.

Turn to 40.



32

"WAIT!" you shout, flipping the cowl of your enchanted cloak away from your face. Arno stops reading from the scroll and glances up at you. Fearful uncertainty covers his dark drow features.

The tarrasque lowers its horned head as you enter the blue-lit chamber, cocking its eyes and licking its enormous jaws at the prospect of an unexpected addition to the day's menu. You run stiffly to Arno's side, opening your spellbook as you do.

"Our only chance is to cast our Limited Wish spells together!" you tell the half-drow. "We must both wish for the tarrasque's death and finish our incantations at the same time!"

Your old rival glances back and forth between you and the drooling beast, as if he's having a problem deciding which one of you to trust. Suddenly, you realize that this would be a perfect opportunity for either of you to destroy the other! With your defenses down while casting the spell, you'll both be more vulnerable than ever before to an at-

tack. In fact, all it would take would be a change in the Limited Wish spellwords.

"How do I know you won't cast the wish on me and feed me to that thing?" Arno demands.

"You don't! And I don't know what's in your mind, either. It's a chance we'll both have to take!" you reply.

Roll two dice and add the result to your charisma skill score. If the total is 17 or more, turn to 151. If it is less than 17, turn to 124.

33

The startled guards leap to their feet, reaching for crossbows and clubs. Their half-breed faces with the sinister orcish features darken with confusion when they see the thick stream of yellowish-green vapors pour from your open palms and form a billowing cloud above the campfire. In the next instant, the half-orcs are collapsing to the ground, gagging and vomiting in violent convulsions.

"Get some wood on that fire!" mutters Thayne even before the last guard stops twitching and loses consciousness. "We need to guide them around that sandbar to this point."

Dalris and Garn rush past you toward the campfire, but you call them back with a sharp warning.

"Stop! Throw the wood on the fire from here. I've made that cloud permanent, so the guards will stay out of action as long as possible. If you go under it, you'll get some of it, too!"

The odor alone of the Stinking Cloud spell is enough to make someone hesitant. Your warning makes the two fighters more cautious. The orcs have cut a large supply of firewood which the three of you start pitching onto the burning coals. Within minutes, the flames are blazing higher than the top of Citadel Rock itself.

"Hey! Douse that fire!"

"There's something wrong at Post One! Must be those stinkin' Kandians! Get 'em!"

The gruff shout comes from the next guardpost to the east and is echoed from other positions down the beach. Instead of paying attention to the loud cries, you toss even more fuel on the blaze.

"Here they come!" Garn shouts, brandishing his gleaming paladin's sword toward the east where the sky is beginning to lighten with sunrise. At least a dozen of the half-orcs, accompanied by a mounted knight with a short lance, burst through the coastal brush to investigate the bonfire.

"And here come the ships!" murmurs Dalris. You whirl toward the sea, feeling your heart pound with excitement and joy at the sight of the twin galleys under full sail and knifing through dark waters toward the beach.

Meanwhile, the onrushing guardsmen are too busy with the bonfire to take notice of the impending invasion. The lone knight loses control of his charger, gagging and clutching at the visor of his helmet. The heavy animal crashes past you, mucous streaming from its nostrils. Garn steps from the shadows just as the beast passes and grasps the helpless rider by his scarlet surcoat.

The knight crashes from the saddle to the ground, landing squarely on his neck and shoulders at Garn's feet. The paladin is astride the fallen man instantly, his holy sword raised and gleaming in the night air. The death blow is unnecessary, though, because the fall must have broken the renegade's neck. His armored legs kick once, then lie still.

The vapors of the Stinking Cloud spell are so effective that only a dozen or so of the half-orc mongrels are left standing to be cut to ribbons when Garn's mounted knights reach your position from the galleys. The remainder have collapsed in reaction to the noxious cloud. Some are heaving, while others are writhing in violent convulsions.

Turn to 63.

34

"Where's the signalman?" you demand. "I'll give him a reply to send to the rangers' galley."

The youthful mariner gives you a crude salute. "He's in the fore shrouds, Magus Delling."

You lurch forward past the sailor, clearing a path with your bronzewood mage's staff. In the bow, a man is clinging to the tarred webbing with his elbows and legs while fanning the hooded shutter of a signal lamp. From out of the

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darkness, you spot a pinpoint of light flickering in response to the signal.

"Douse that light until I tell you what to send!" you command gruffly. "If Arno's patrols see those signals, we might as well send a messenger and tell them we're coming!"

"I was just tellin' me mate to hold on fer a bit!" calls the signalman in his thick Seagate accent. "What message d'ye want me to send 'em?"

"HE DOESN'T WANT TO SEND ANY MESSAGE YET!"

Dalris's shout from behind comes only seconds before the bard reaches your side, followed closely by Garn. Both are breathing heavily from their rush to intercept your signal. The young sailor who fetched you is lagging sheepishly behind the large paladin as if Garn could protect him from your magical wrath.

The irate bard steps in front of you. "Who gave you command of this invasion?" she demands. "You know nothing about that coastline. There are bogs along that beach deep enough to swallow this ship! We won't know where we are until we scout it."

"That's her side," says Garn. "I say we'd be risking all chance of surprise by sending a scouting party. If they were caught, it'd give away our entire operation. We were just coming to you for advice when we heard that you were going to make a choice without us."

"Well, MAGUS Delling?" demands Dalris, fire in her eyes and a sarcastic sneer on her sensual face. "Now that you've 'conferred' with us, what's your decision?"

If you decide to scout the coast before the invasion, turn to 113. If you want to risk all with a full invasion force, turn to 128.

35

You've never had much success with teleport spells. In fact, the last time you used one was when your right leg was fused with a tree trunk for several hours, which caused permanent damage to your hip muscles. As for the powerful Limited Wish incantation, you brought it with you to use against the tarrasque and don't want to waste it just to

move from place to place inside the ancient temple.

Deciding against the use of magic to get past the tarrasque and its victim, you exit through the double doorway and wander along a wide corridor littered with the same gruesome debris you discovered in the hall.

The growls and snarls of the tarrasque are no longer muffled. You reach an intersection where the main corridor splits into two smaller passages. At the far ends of both, you can see dim light, one a pale blue and the other more like daylight.

If you want to follow the passage leading to the pale blue light, turn to 28. If you want to follow the other passage, turn to 193.

36

You turn around slowly and face your companions' impatient gazes with creases of worry above your arched brows. "We don't have time to proceed with our plans for the invasion," you announce in a grave, low voice. "A force even stronger than Pazuzu's threatens to destroy both Arno and all of Tikandia."

Your audience receives your mysterious pronouncement with several seconds of tense silence. Then Thayne's blustering cry, strangely muffled in the svirfneblen throat, breaks the stillness.

"What 'force' is more powerful than Pazuzu's demonic hold on those demented paladins?" he demands.

"EX-paladins!" Garn corrects your old tutor, anger and frustration in his voice. "The Seagate Order of Holy Dyan is now the only brotherhood of knights worthy to be called paladins!"

"I don't care what you call them!" Thayne scoffs. "They're still backed by Pazuzu's magic. But if there's some power that can stop both that demon and Arno, I say let's hear about it!"

Garn's tanned face reddens slightly at the old elf's off-handed treatment of his carefully selected and trained group of elite warriors. Before he can reply, Dalris stands and raises both hands in a gesture of mediation.

"Stop your quibbling and pay attention to Carr." She

turns toward you. "Is it the tarrasque you're talking about, Carr? Is that why you're reluctant to cross Pirates' Alley over to the mainland?" On the last words the bard's voice grows more challenging and shrill. You know she still regards your unwillingness to confront Arno openly as a sign of cowardice.

"Is Dalris speaking the truth?" asks Garn. "Are you afraid to encounter the tarrasque?"

You sigh, knowing you must answer the charge somehow. If you decide to reveal what you've seen in the crystal and learned in Landor's notes, turn to **69**. Of course, you could simplify things by lying to them (**88**), or by using your Suggestion spell to convince them you are right (**101**).

37

You barely get the last syllable of the Wall of Force incantation out of your mouth before Arno's enchanted mace strikes you down from behind. You fall forward, almost tumbling into the shimmering pale blue curtain of energy produced by your spell.

"Damn you to the Abyss, Delling!" the wizard curses. "Now I'll have to waste a valuable Disintegrate spell on your clumsy Seagate magic."

You try to roll over on your back to confront your rival, but he kicks you hard on the side of your head, blinding you with blood and pain. You drop into unconsciousness and never feel the next blow from the death's-head mace.

Roll 1 die and add 6 to it. If your permanent Protection from Evil spell is active, subtract 2 from the total. Either way, deduct the adjusted result from your current hit points for a new hit-point total and turn to **152**—if you're still alive, that is!

38

Dalris and her force of Kandian barbarians are delighted by your decision to invade the wild eastern coast. They know those Wealwood beaches well from their nightly raids to liberate refugees from Arno's tyrannous rule. The bard supervises the logistics, arranging for two large galleys to ferry your forces across Pirates' Alley after nightfall.

Several hours before midnight, Garn's knights and Thayne's elven rangers converge on the waterfront at Freeton, the main port of Seagate Island, and pack themselves aboard the vessels. You've already settled yourself and Ruyf on the galley carrying Garn and his contingent as well as Dalris and her barbarians.

An hour later, the bard stands at the railing between you and Garn, staring at the starless night over Tikandia. According to the mariners, the Wealwood coast line is just beyond the horizon.

"I was beginning to think this day was never coming," Dalris says.

"If it were not for your bravery, we'd still be waiting for the 'right' moment," Garn observes softly. "It was your news that alerted Carr that the time had come to act or Tikandia would be threatened by an ancient evil."



"And Seagate as well," you add. Your right hip is aching from the cool dampness, and you're resting your weight on the magical bronzewood staff that Dalris's father, Archdruid Perth, gave you years ago.

"How so?" asks Garn. "Can tarrasques swim?"

"No one knows what tarrasques can do," interjects Dalris. "We thought they were just creatures of myth."

"I've watched the last of the sorcerer-kings preparing themselves for their ultimate sacrifice," you tell them. "I've heard them say that the beast was looking toward Seagate, where their people had fled. To me, that means that the tarrasque can indeed swim, at least as far as Seagate Island."

"Are you telling us that the future of Tikandia depends

upon the vision in your scrying crystal? Does that make you feel important?" sneers Dalris.

You turn abruptly to face the hostile woman. An agonizing pain shoots through your hip from the sudden movement, causing your leg to collapse. You manage to catch yourself with the bronzewood staff, but the pain is so great that you can't speak. Garn supports you with his armored shoulder until the wave of agony subsides.

"Let me help you," urges the paladin. "You must be free of this distraction if you are to face this menace." He has used his clerical spell to relieve your pain before, but never at a time like this.

"Don't do it, Carr!" storms Dalris. "You know that paladins may only use their healing prayers once a day. If Garn wastes his healing spell on you, he won't be able to heal battle wounds for himself or our fighters."

If you want Garn to heal your old wound, turn to 114; if you want to refuse his help, turn to 127.

39

You try to focus your mind on the spells that could help you decipher the ancient symbols on the arch, but the warning of the marid is still ringing in your ears. The marsh is waking around you, and you decide not to disobey the marid by using a spell that might be ineffective on such a dangerous objective.

Turn to 27.

40

Dalris sips the tea and looks beyond your head, out the leaded glass window at the starlit night.

"The simple fact is that Oram has been dead for less than a day and Arno has already abolished public worship at the cathedral," she begins. "There are reports of atrocities committed daily by the so-called 'Knights of Truth' upon religious townspeople and pilgrims in Saven."

"What about the outlands?" you ask, pointing to her clay-stained hair and clothes. "I can see that you've been in the Wealwood area. How much resistance is left?"

"Less than a thousand warriors," she says in a tired

voice. "Arno's renegades have captured my father's sacred grove and have driven the Kandian freedom fighters toward Yellow Marsh. One of the refugees told me just tonight that the Knights of Truth are mounting a sweep through the marsh as a final blow to my fighters."

You look away from the bard, shielding your reaction to her news of the action in Yellow Marsh. You doubt if Arno knows about the Robe of the Archmagi, because your father never wrote of it. Still, Arno might chance upon the sealed temple and release the sleeping tarrasque. You slap the heavy oak desk with a loud crack which startles Dalris.

"We must invade the mainland immediately!" you announce. "I want you to bring Thayne and Garn to me right now. Tonight! You'll find them with their men at the waterfront. Our ships must sail tomorrow! And you might get your Kandians ready to move, as well!"

The bard stares at you suspiciously, perhaps because she has seldom seen you so excited. Then she shrugs and leaves, shutting the door behind her. As soon as her footsteps recede, you command the Unseen Servant to bolt the door, and you start preparing for the invasion. As you prepare a list of the components you might need, you realize that you could use the help of Rufyl, your usually invisible pseudodragon familiar. But he will not be returning to Castle Arcane until tomorrow. You could, however, cast a Summon Familiar spell to fetch him now.

If you wish to summon Rufyl to assist you tonight, turn to 9. If you'd rather wait until he returns in the morning, turn to 51.

41

You step away from the flaming entrance to the Temple of Power and focus on the last image of the Robe of the Archmagi as you saw it in the time crystal. You concentrate upon every detail you can remember of the surroundings and recite the Teleport incantation:

"Rulers of the material world and its dimensions! I ask you to transport my physical being into the location conjured in my thoughts!"

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill

score. If the total is more than 33, turn to 195. If the total is between 27 and 33, turn to 99. If it is less than 27, turn to 181.

42

"Just give me your hand," says Jarmel. *"Quickly!"* The opinicus holds its prehensile forepaw toward you. The intelligent simian face with the penetrating amber eyes betrays no emotions, just high intelligence.

Suddenly you know what you must do. If Arno is close to the lost temple, nothing else matters. You must confront him immediately before he frees the tarrasque and discovers the Robe of the Archmagi!

You have fleeting thoughts about your companions, hoping that they'll both understand and forgive your desertion of them. *They couldn't help me against him anyway,* you think as you reach for Jarmel's paw.

The opinicus's spell-like powers overwhelm you the instant your fingers touch its golden fur. Everything else, including your friends, simply vanishes! The only thing you can see is Jarmel's tawny fur and dark wings extended to both sides. The creature's handlike paw grasps your own hand firmly but without pressure.

Your body seems weightless and even massless, floating beside and slightly under the opinicus's body. Around you, it's impossible to distinguish ground from sky or even light from dark. The night itself appears to have vanished. Indescribable swirling forms composed of neither lines nor curves nor colors you recognize surround you on your flight through dimensions you've never even imagined.

The time-distorting journey ends almost as soon as it began, with the experience lingering in your mind as if it had taken hours. The night shadows appear thicker than they were when you left your friends, perhaps because the opinicus has landed in a dense jungle amid vines and creepers hanging in twisted masses from overhead trees.

"Remain here while I fetch Lord Shanif." You scarcely have time to register the mental words before the opinicus vanishes. While you wait for the marid, you might take advantage of the opportunity to activate any new permanent

spells you wish to have instantly available:

<i>Comprehend Languages</i>	<i>Protection from Evil</i>
<i>Detect Evil</i>	<i>Protection from Normal</i>
	<i>Missiles</i>
<i>Detect Invisibility</i>	<i>Read Magic</i>
<i>Detect Magic</i>	<i>Tongues</i>
<i>Infravision</i>	

Mark each spell you select as "Active" on your List of Spells. Remember to deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score for each newly activated spell, including Infravision; then turn to 2.



43

Instead of wasting your spellcasting time on a defensive spell, you decide it would be better to attack Arno while his attention is focused on the temple entrance. You go over the list of spells that you've memorized for this confrontation, trying to decide which of them would be most effective.

Your concentration on the spells is broken suddenly by the sound of familiar voices at the corner of the pyramidal mound. The noise isn't an Audible Glamer dweomer—it's your companions, who you left in Yellow Marsh during the night!

They're headed straight for Arno, but they apparently can't see him. Unless you stop them, they'll be directly between the dark wizard and whatever powerful magic he's directing toward you and the temple entrance. You dart from the archway, removing your cloak of invisibility as you run toward them.

From the look on their faces, you see quickly that they

were not pleased by your leaving them in the marsh overnight. You hold your hands in the air and silence their grievances before they start to air them.

"Later! Arno's here and that's more important than any squabbles you have with me."

You turn back to the temple entrance just as Arno removes his invisibility dweomer, perhaps to channel all of his strength into a more powerful spell. You get your first good look at your rival since your last encounter at the cathedral in Saven many years ago.

Turn to 172.

44

"I just remembered a way to find that out," you tell your companions.

You remove a small white feather from its special pocket inside your Cloak of Elvenkind and, ignoring a gasp of dismay from Dalris, hold it high above your head. Then you raise your other arm, still clutching the bronzewood staff, and pronounce the spellphrase for Fly, which you first heard from Beldon, your uncle and the man you are certain murdered your father.

"Wing on wind, fly me to darkness's end!"

Cross Fly off your List of Spells. Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 27 or more, turn to 66. If it is less than 27, turn to 86.

45

You lunge reflexively toward the large winged shape while uttering two Elvish command words.

"Trope gahn!"

Your bronzewood staff flares instantly, extending to twice its normal length. You jab its far end at the shadowy creature, only to have it grab the staff with a powerful forepaw.

Before you can react, the winged thing jerks the staff, pulling you off balance and wrenching your old hip injury. You fall to one knee, giving a cry of pain, as you fumble for one of your war darts tipped with druid sleeping poison.

Deduct 3 hit points from your current total because of the re-injured hip and turn to 109.

You decide that you'll be better off than you are now regardless of who wins the deadly game of tag between Arno and the tarrasque. For that reason, you remain hidden at the doorway, invisible in the folds of your enchanted cloak, while Arno completes his Limited Wish spell.

Turn to 132.

You realize quickly that it was a mistake to select your Polymorph Other spell when you need to use such haste. You scarcely have time to remove the dried cocoon from its secret pocket in your cloak before Arno shouts one of the most dreaded spellwords you know.

"Slikkitl!"

A single bolt of magical lightning streaks from the tiny glass rod in your rival's dark hand, straight for your chest.

Roll 2 dice. If your permanent Protection from Evil spell is active, subtract 2 from the result. Either way, deduct the adjusted result from your current hit points for a new hit-point total and turn to 152—if you're still alive, that is!

"Return to your master and tell him that Landor's son will remain here with his companions and that we will try to reach the Temple of Power on our own." You feel a slight warmth coming from the creature's brain, a warmth that prompts you to add, "Perhaps you'll even help us by giving us directions."

The telepathic beast's simian face is an emotionless mask, but its thoughts now contain a positive warmth that you didn't perceive before.

"As both Lord Shanif's familiar and a defender of good causes, I shall reward your loyalty to your friends, human, by giving you a helpful suggestion. Use the Sceptre of Bhukod which you have in that sheath on your back. Its energies will seek to rejoin the spirits of its creators and it will lead you to their tomb within the temple."

"The ruins lie four hours' march from here through the wildest portion of Yellow Marsh," the opinicus thinks into

your minds. *"There are no trails, but the Sceptre of Bhukod will show you the way. I warn you, though, that the one you seek, this Arno creature, may already be waiting at the temple to see my master leave. By the time you reach the ruins, he may have discovered an entrance."*

The opinicus's large wings unfurl from its humped back and begin to vibrate like the wings of a fly. A high-pitched hum is all you hear or feel, but the creature's outline in your infravision flickers several times and then disappears. The beast has vanished, leaving your mind ringing with its praise for remaining loyal to your companions.

Increase your charisma skill score by 1 point. Continue reading at 102 if you've come from Saven, at 187 if you've landed secretly in the marsh, or at 194 if you're invading the eastern Wealwood coast.

49

"Archmage Delling, you must act quickly now! The slab that sealed the temple entrance has been destroyed and your rival has entered the Temple of Power."

The opinicus's news devastates you. Shanif trusted you with a simple thing—keeping watch—and . . .

"You do not have time to criticize yourself," says the beast. *"My master is in serious trouble on the astral plane. He has been lured into combat by Pazuzu's allies, the githyanki, and I fear that he will not escape their vengeance for something that happened a long time ago. Neither he nor I can help you fight the wizard Arno or the beast within the temple."* Jarmel reads your thought of dismay and quickly adds, *"However, your father gave me a message for you."*

"My father? How could my father give me a message? He's dead!"

"Landor lives in another dimension, on the ethereal plane," says the opinicus. *"I know him well because I often carry messages between him and Lord Shanif."*

Your brain reels with questions and emotions, but you manage to control both by reminding yourself of the threat of the tarrasque. *"What was my father's message?"* you ask in a stunned voice.

"Landor advises you to combine forces with your enemy to

slay the beast," the opinicus replies, "and to use crown, robe, and sceptre together to fight the drow queen."

"How can I join forces with Arno?" you ask, aghast. "And what's this about a drow queen?"

"I am only a messenger, not a wizard," says Jarmel curtly. "I am also a servant to Lord Shanif, who needs me desperately, for he is outnumbered by the githyanki of Pazuzu. Is there anything else you require of me before I return to my master? His Time Stop spell will not last much longer."

You're torn between going with the opinicus to the astral plane to help Shanif battle his enemies and perhaps even to see your father (136) or returning to the Bhukodian Temple of Power to combat your own enemies of the material world (108).

50

"Go ahead," you tell Garn. "Call your spirits. If they can numb this agony long enough to get me past the beach, I can take over from there."

Garn ignores your mild irreverence and places his hands inside your Cloak of Elvenkind, several inches above your right hip. The devout cavalier raises his eyes to the dark sky and prays in a low voice.

"Hear my prayer, Lord Dian. Relieve Carr Delling's pain so that he may concentrate his special powers upon the holy task we must face tonight. I, thy humble servant, beseech thee to grant me this boon."

Almost immediately, Garn's hands are enveloped with an aura of blue-green light that spreads instantly to your side and hip. The supernatural glow vanishes as it penetrates your robe and the flesh beneath it. You feel a warmth coming between your mind and the pain, dulling the old agony. In just seconds, you can move your leg without the crippling stiffness.

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your current hit points. Remember that the maximum total hit points must never exceed the number you started this adventure with. Then turn to 137 if the invasion is landing at Saven, or to 147 if you're planning to try to slip unobserved into Yellow Marsh.

Satisfied that there will be plenty of time tomorrow for Rufyl to collect all the spell components you will need, you lean forward and study the titles on the full bookshelves covering the interior wall opposite your desk. The powerful dweomer of your Unseen Servant spell responds quickly to your instructions, lifting a candle up toward the shelf on the right.

"Higher," you mumble, though the magical force doesn't require verbal commands to do your bidding. The candle rises smoothly in midair, illuminating the top three rows of hide-bound volumes. You spot the one you need, one of your father's thin spellbooks which you discovered at Wealwood long before that druid's shrine was threatened by Arno's force of corrupt paladins. The Unseen Servant is already pulling the slight tome from the shelf by the time you point to it.

After many years of studying his archives, you find Lander's secret scrawl so familiar that you read it as easily as a book written in modern Common. You quickly locate the obscure reference you remember hearing about during the scene in the scrying crystal, and then reach for the teapot to fill your cup. It promises to be a sleepless night.

You're so intrigued by your discovery that time seems to stand still as you study the implications. Finally, several hours later, the pieces begin to fall together.

That's why Lander left Rufyl at Wealwood whenever he went into the ruins! you exclaim. *He knew that Rufyl might accidentally telepath the location of the temple's entrance to someone else!*

Many times you've questioned the pseudodragon about Lander's trips into the marshes, but the familiar continues to deny that he ever 'heard' anything in your father's mind about the entrance to the Bhukodian ruins.

"I never said I didn't remember Master Lander's trips into the marshes," Rufyl has told you several times. *"In fact, I can recall his great alarm on the last occasion, when he returned with the Sceptre of Bhukod. I sensed a terrible secret locked in his innermost thoughts, but he never let me read anything about it."*

You smile to yourself as you remember Rufyl's mental conversation. Then you look back at Landor's scrawl and smile even more. You add a quick note of your own in the margin and close the pocket spellbook just as you hear sounds coming from below.

Turn to 62.

52

"Daybreak is only a few hours away," you remind your companions. "If we get lost in that marsh, we won't be able to divert the guards' attention from our invasion. I think we should use Dalris's knowledge of these waters and try to reach the beach."

"That's what I wanted to hear!" murmurs Dalris. "We can work our way around Citadel Rock until we get to the beach, and then slip along the edge of the rock behind the thick brush growing beside it."

She steers the dinghy close enough for you to pat the massive vertical wall of basalt. You look up at its black expanse towering above you and try to decide which would be the best way to use your magic against Arno's guards.

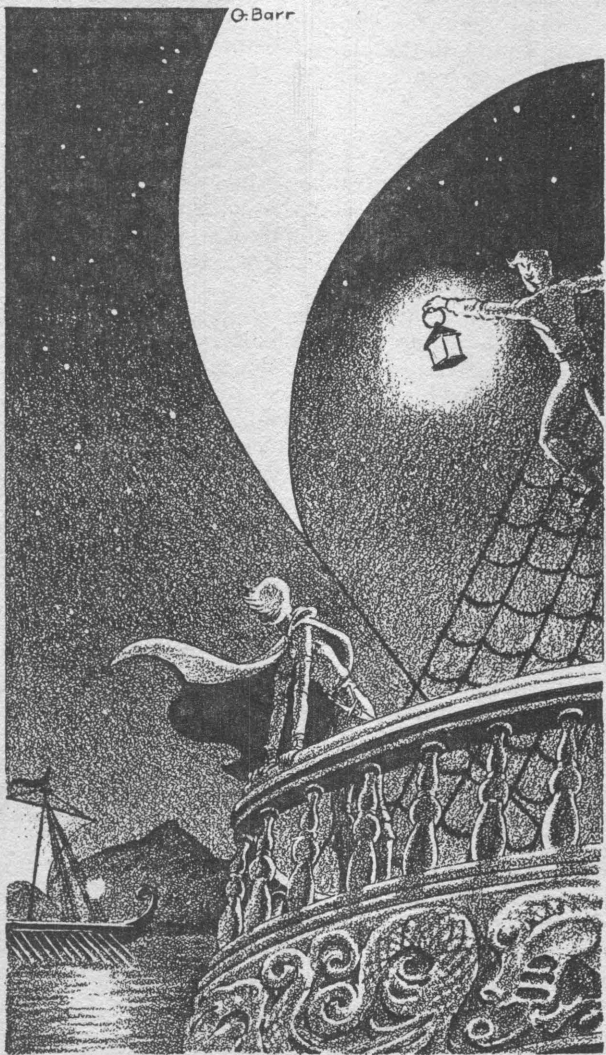
I could either use my Spider Climb spell to scale this rock and drop down behind them while the others attack from the beach (81), or I could go with them along the edge of the rock (22).

53

The signalman listens intently to your message, then climbs into the starboard shrouds with his hooded lantern. You watch from the deck while he flashes several quick bursts of light across the dark expanse of open sea between the two galleys. You stare at the distant hulk, waiting for Thayne's response, though you know you won't be able to read it.

Suddenly there's a flurry of signals from the other ship. They come so fast that you can hardly tell the difference between long and short bursts of light. To you, it seems like a flickering candle, without rhythm or meaning, but to the signalman's trained eyes, the pattern is as clear as a written message.

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"Got it!" mutters the sailor in the rigging. His hand moves the shutter of the lamp rapidly, informing his counterpart aboard Thayne's ship that you've received the signal. A quick volley of light from the other galley, LONG—LONG—SHORT—SHORT, answers the final transmission, followed by the dense blackness of the starless sky.

"What did he say?" you ask the signalman.

If you told Thayne about the plan to send in the rangers first, turn to 8. If you were asking him about a mass assault and the harbor lights, turn to 29.

54

You somehow remain standing at the stone altar, staring at the lifeless hulk of the tarrasque. In the corner of your eye, you see a furtive movement of Arno's hand beneath his thick robe. Before he can retrieve his assassin's dagger, you thrust your bronzewood staff under his black chin, sending him stumbling backward.

The half-drow wizard catches his balance and crouches with his dagger drawn, circling you cautiously like a seasoned street fighter. Both of you are so exhausted mentally from your cooperative spellcasting that you can't even think of a magical formula, much less cast one.

Do you want to fight Arno hand-to-hand (206) or use your Cloak of Elvenkind to escape (87)?

55

You hear the sound of oars before you spot the approaching dinghy.

"Pull us over, Carr!" calls Thayne in a low voice. The elf's stunted svirfneblin body is standing in the prow of a boat like yours, but it's too dark to discern his features. Suddenly a snake-like coil of rope lands on top of your dozing familiar. The alarmed beast springs to his clawed feet, his scaly hide darkening to blend with the night air.

"Relax, Rufyl. It's just a rope," you mutter.

You reach for the line, ignoring the flurry of mental epithets from the cranky pseudodragon. Rufyl lost a lot of sleep helping you procure your spell components and he's

irritable. Garn helps you haul the elf's boat toward your own.

"What do you think that light is?" you ask your old teacher. He may have lost the skills of a wizard when he was reincarnated, but he has retained the knowledge.

The bluish-white light from the horizon is getting brighter every minute. In its glow, Thayne's contorted gnomish features are calm, but you notice a hand caressing the feathered shaft of a war dart in his belt.

"It's not firelight, that's for sure," he replies. "My guess is a Continual Light spell. Arno's probably got a few look-outs watching who'll give the alarm as soon they spot something big. We could sneak my rangers into Saven by landing small boats just beyond the fringe of the light (25) or we could sail right into that glare and ram our galleys down their throats (131)."



56

The pulsating light of the sceptre seems stronger as you inch your way toward the dark chamber just ahead. You can't be sure what it means, but you think you might be getting near the original source of the sceptre's power. Once you reach the end of the narrow passage, you cautiously poke first the enchanted wand and then your head into the opening.

You discover that you've reached a large chamber with a slab roof supported by dozens of sturdy granite columns. By the Sceptre of Bhukod's magic glow, you can see that the floor is littered with the debris of the tarrasque's last rampage. Broken urns, stone benches, and splintered human bones are everywhere, but there are no signs at all of life, human or otherwise.

Turn to 89

"I think it'd be best to confront Arno openly and quickly at Saven, before he has time to muster his knights and other troops from the provinces."

"Excellent!" says Garn. Your agreement with his plan quickly erases all traces of doubt from his face. "My knights will board the galley tomorrow morning."

"Let's wait until dark," Dalris interjects. "Arno has spies on Seagate, and the later anyone knows about our invasion the better. Even then, we might not surprise the port guards."

"My rangers won't like this," Thayne grumbles. "They're mountain fighters, not marines!"

You shake your head and smile slightly at the almost comical ugliness of the elf's transformed face. "Thayne, Garn's paladins will lead the assault. Your elven archers will be behind them, picking off Arno's guardsmen on the rooftops, just as if they were taking high ground in the mountains. They'll love it—you know they will! Now leave me, all of you. I've got things to do before tomorrow."

Garn nods in satisfaction at Thayne and Dalris, then leads them toward the door. The bard casts you a glance of mild distrust blended with uncertainty just before your Unseen Servant dweomer closes the heavy portal and bolts it, shutting out distractions.

If you've already summoned Rufyl, turn to 116. If not, turn to 9.

"Lord Shanif has commanded me to take you to him at once," replies the opinicus into all of your minds. *"My master must leave the Temple of Power unguarded and he says that only the son of Landor may take his place as guardian of the ruins."*

"Shanif must have heard something about Arno's sweep through the marsh," you tell your friends. "It may mean that he's nearing the ruins at this very moment."

"Wait a minute!" interrupts Dalris. "We're in the middle of an invasion here! I've got a hundred of my best warriors facing death on that beach unless we can divert the atten-

tion of those blasted orc guards while my men land!"

"Dalris is right, Carr," adds Garn. "My knights will also be relying upon us to create a diversion long enough for their horses to wade ashore through the surf. Without our help, our entire force might be annihilated on the beach.

You think you perceive a slight sniff from the opinicus, then the creature says, "*Lord Shanif probably already knows of this invasion and believes it to be of less importance than guarding the temple. I only know that my master insisted that I find the son of Landor and bring him to the ruins with utmost haste. Surely your associates here can do what they've come to do without you. In any event, I can take only one person with me by the dimensional routes we shall be taking. They must remain here.*"

You stare at the curious monkey-camel beast whose bright yellow aura seems to illuminate the speechless faces of your comrades. You don't want to leave them to handle the invasion of Tikandia alone, but you may be forfeiting your only chance to stop Arno before he enters the Bhukodian ruins. The choice is difficult, but you must decide quickly whether to go with the opinicus (42) or stay with your friends (48).

59

You dislike the idea of killing the sleeping sorcerer, but you can't risk the failure of your mission. *This is war!* you tell yourself, as you raise a long dagger to plunge it into Arno's chest.

"Carr! Don't!" cries a familiar voice.

You jerk your head up at the interruption and lower your dagger. Garn and Dalris are just rounding the corner of the pyramidal mound to your left, followed closely by Thayne and Rufyl. The paladin is frowning, and there are tears in Dalris's eyes.

"Has your cowardice come this far?" the bard demands. "First you leave us when we need your magic, and now you're killing a sleeping man!"

Garn is silent, brooding because you've offended his paladin vows by your decision to kill Arno.

"I don't have time to explain anything to you right now!"

you growl to both of them. "If you object to my killing him, then stay here and guard him—if you can! I've got to go inside the temple. If I'm not back by dusk, get off the mainland and take everyone you care about with you!"

Deduct 2 points from your charisma skill score and continue in 120.

60

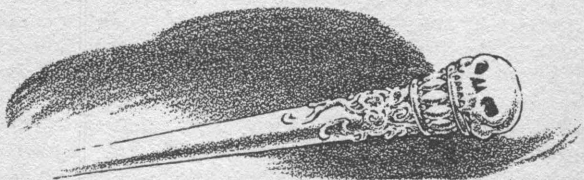
You realize almost as soon as the spell is cast that it's not going to work. The ancient power of the Bhukodian sorcerers is simply too great for you to combat without magical assistance of some kind. You decide that it would be better to heed the marid's warning and stop trying to get past the Wizard Lock.

Turn to 27.

61

At the instant you finish the Wall of Fire incantation, a sheet of violet flame springs from the top of the archway, draping the open entrance like a fiery curtain. The heat from the dweomer drives you several steps backward, your arms raised to protect your face.

"Idiot! Now I shall be forced to waste my Dispel Magic formula on a barrier created by a simpleton!" he sneers. "See how you like your own spell!"



You spin around just in time to see Arno point his skull-tipped staff at you and whisper a rapid command word. The miniature ivory skull looks at you and opens its mouth! Suddenly a stream of cold, foul air slams into your chest, forcing you to step backward. You smell the flames of your own spell scorching the Cloak of Elvenkind and try to brace yourself against the next blast of magical wind from

Arno's spell-staff.

You'd like to use a spell, but the distraction of keeping your balance against the magical wind is too great. Arno's wild-eyed expression is one of insane delight as he takes another step closer and watches you lose your balance. The magical wind is so strong now that it lifts you from the ground and hurls you into the flaming furnace you created with your own magic. ✘

62

Just as you're beginning to relate Landor's description of the Bhukodian ruins to what you saw in the scrying crystal, you hear a thunderous commotion downstairs followed by the sound of heavy boots on the stairs.

The door bursts open, admitting a stunted little creature wearing an oiled black leather tunic over trousers of the same material. His chest and arms are covered with armor made of rings of rare mithral steel, and he wears a stiff leather belt hung with six huge gas darts and a formidable mithral pickaxe. The deep gnome's arsenal is completed by twin belt daggers of the same metal.

"What's the problem, Delling?" he demands. "I was in the middle of something more promising than a conversation with a wizard, I'll tell you that much!"

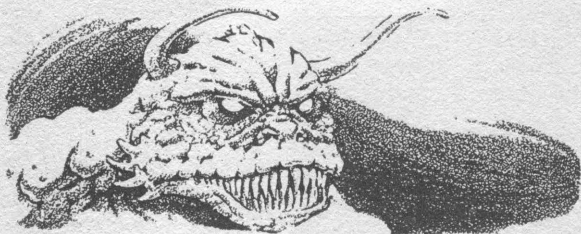
Your elven friend, Thayne, has accepted his transformation by Dalris's archdruid father into the body of a svirfneblin, perhaps even to the point of relishing certain aspects of it—like the fascination his ugliness holds for both elven and human women. He remains your closest confidant, although you've acquired even more magical powers than Thayne had before reincarnation stripped them from him. Now your old tutor spends most of his time training his force of elven rangers for the invasion of Tikandia.

Just behind Thayne, a tall man clad in expensive but worn suede clothes stands silently beside Dalris, waiting for your explanation. Garn is just as handsome as he was when you and Dalris first met him outside the Moonstar tavern in Saven ten years ago. He has let his brown whiskers join his moustache, forming a neatly trimmed sol-

dier's beard. At his temple, several silver hairs gleam in the light of the candles and lamps, enhancing his natural appearance of nobility and distinction. The polished leather of his boots and halberd glisten in the flickering firelight.

"Sit down, all of you. Dalris has brought word from Tikandia which will change our invasion plans. Tell your story, Dalris," you urge her, "and then I have something to add."

After Dalris relates her news of Archcleric Oram's death and the movement of Arno's guards toward Yellow Marsh, you repeat the warnings about the tarrasque given you by the marid years before. Then you briefly describe what you've just seen in the crystal, omitting any mention of the magical robe. The less they know of your primary quest, the less they can reveal if questioned by someone with telepathic powers.



"Why didn't you tell us about this . . . this tarrasque before?" Garn demands. The paladin's eyes are flashing with the fire of a crusader. Your description of the evil monster that destroyed a civilization has sparked the warrior's sense of mission, and you can see that he's primed to fight the monster single-handed, if necessary.

"Because Dalris and I both thought it was a simple legend," you reply. "In our haste to find the crown of Aerdrie and rid Seagate of Arno's henchmen, we dismissed the marid's tale. In fact, it was only a few years ago that I finally discovered a reference to the tarrasque in my father's notebooks."

Stunned at learning that there might be some magical solution to the problem, your companions bombard you with questions.

“How do you kill a tarrasque?” Garn demands.

“How could such a creature still be alive? It must be dead after nearly fifty years!” adds Thayne.

“How did the wizards trap—” begins Dalris.

“Quiet! Let me think!” you growl, not wanting to mention the Robe of the Archmagi just yet. You turn away and gaze out the leaded window at the stars above the strip of sea separating your island home from Arno’s evil forces. You need to seriously consider how to stop Arno and his apparently “tame” demon, Pazuzu, before they free the tarrasque and discover the Robe of the Archmagi. You stand there in silence, contemplating the alternatives.

The mass invasion that Garn and Thayne have been preparing might still be the best way to confront Arno (77). Or you might use the invasion as a diversionary tactic so that you can slip past the coast guards directly into Yellow Marsh (21). A third approach would be to use stealth alone to slip past the guards and make your way to the ruins (36) of the Bhukodian temple.

63

In the minutes remaining before dawn, the men take control of the coast near the rock. Dalris’s Kandians hold a brief celebration of their return to their homeland after so many years. But soon she joins you and Thayne where the two of you sit watching the joyous scene.

“Wow! That landing sure went even better than we had hoped,” the bard exclaims.

“It always worries me when things go that smoothly,” says Thayne. His little svirfneblin face twists in worry.

“It just means that Arno’s Knights of Truth are away right now, probably gathered in the hills, which means that we don’t have much time to look for the Bhukodian ruins. All of this will have been for nothing if Arno reaches the temple before we do.”

“Then why are we sitting here?” Dalris demands.

You leave Garn’s troops in control, knowing that the

Kandians will be off toward Wealwood right away. Then, you, Dalris, Garn, and Thayne turn your backs on the familiarity of the coast and head into the strange, misty Yellow Marsh. Turn to 133.

64

“What are you trying to do? Make us think this is going to be easy?” demands Dalris as you near the end of your story. “We know those hills and swamps better than anyone else in the world! There’s no way for that plan to work.”

The two men seemed impressed with your story, but the bard’s challenge makes them eye you suspiciously. You realize that of your companions none believes your reasons for not invading Tikandia. In fact, you see that it was a mistake to suggest an alternate plan because now they’re wondering if they can trust your judgment in other matters.

Before they have a chance to question your motives any further, you wave your hand as if you were erasing the idea. “You’re absolutely right!” you exclaim. “We should go ahead with our original plans for an invasion.”

“Where?” demands Thayne, as if challenging you to come up with the right answer.

Deduct 1 point from your charisma skill score for being seen to be indecisive. Then choose between a landing at Saven (57) or Wealwood (80).

65

You sharpen your senses and scan the woods all around the entrance to the temple, while listening to the sounds of more than one person approaching from the rear. You’ve heard of spells such as Audible Glamer that can make a person think he hears a dozen or more people—definitely useful for diverting someone’s attention.

If your Detect Invisibility spell is active, turn to 119. If not, turn to 130.

66

The spell’s familiar dweomer begins to vibrate the molecules of your body. You direct your will toward the horizon, where the eerie bluish-white light is getting even brighter.

When the vibrations approach their peak, you let them carry you upward.

"He's flying!" shouts a sailor from the deck below you.

You circle the quarterdeck just long enough to give Dalris and Garn a hasty message.

"If I don't come back within ten minutes, wake Rufyl and see if he can contact me telepathically. I'll try to tell him what I've seen."

Without waiting for a reply, you veer away from the galley toward Saven. In two or three minutes, you can see the harbor clearly. It's the only bright spot on the dark Tikan-dian shore, but you're still not close enough to see the source of the light or any signs of movement. Only the masts of tall ships and the outlines of waterfront buildings are visible.

I should have brought a telescope, you chastise yourself. Now I'll have to get closer.

The closer you fly, though, the brighter the light. Soon, it's so bright that it hurts your eyes and you cannot see past it. You must fly higher and higher to stay out of the glare. Finally, you look down upon a vague disk of blinding light hovering over the entire wharf area.

It's a magical light! you think. It's the dweomer of a tremendous Continual Light spell! Arno's lookouts can see the galleys miles away, long before we could see them. I've got to warn—

A sudden tremor in your shoulder reminds you that the Fly spell doesn't last forever. You force the light from your mind so that you can concentrate upon the remnants of the spell, but it's too late. Your body becomes heavy, and you plummet to the dark sea hundreds of feet below. ✕

67

You stand barefoot in the dinghy, waiting for the spell's dweomer to alter the sweat glands of your hands and feet. The events of the past several hours have been confusing, and it's difficult to concentrate. Your inner tension mounts as each second passes without producing the familiar sticky substance on your palms and soles.

"What's the problem?"



Dalris's concerned question adds to your frustration, tearing what is left of your concentration away from the spell.

"Can't you keep your mouth out of my business for just a few minutes?" you mutter angrily. You regret your words almost before they've left your mouth, but the damage is done. The expression of worried concern on Dalris's face twists into one of hurt, dismay, and then anger. Tears well in her dark eyes just before she turns away.

"I didn't mean . . ."

"Don't bother trying to explain failed magic to a *barbarian*," the bard snaps, cutting off your clumsy apology. She pats the hilt of her shortsword and nods toward the beach. "We like action, not words! Let's get ashore and do what we've come to do!"

Deduct 1 point from your charisma skill score; turn to 22.

68

The dweomer of the Teleport spell sweeps over you, spinning the flaming wall around you until it vanishes and leaves you standing in a wide corridor lit by an eerie blue light spilling from an open doorway. You hear rumbling growls and Arno's voice from inside the blue-lit chamber.

"GET BACK! BACK!"

Turn to 168.

69

Dalris is always ready to be negative about your suggestions—though you don't really know why—but now even Garn and Thayne seem disturbed at your decision to change the invasion plans. You know, however, that their objections are strategic rather than personal.

"I can see that you doubt my wisdom in changing the invasion plans," you begin. "Perhaps if I tell you my reasons, you'll see why we must reach Yellow Marsh before Arno enters the lost temple of Bhukod."

"What?" shouts Dalris. "Are you changing our plans just to win a foolish race to those ruins with a rival sorcerer? Have you gone mad?"

Garn's handsome face is blank, but Thayne's transformed cheeks redden beneath the rough deep-gnome skin. You know that the old elf's svirfneblin eyes are blazing behind the blackness of his protective mica goggles.

"My immediate reasons have nothing to do with a quest for knowledge, although the greatest secrets of the sorcerer-kings are guarded within those ruins by the same tarrasque that destroyed their empire. What I fear most is that Arno will stumble upon a force more powerful than Tikandia has known since Bhukod perished centuries ago."

"What 'force' is that?" demands Dalris.

"That's right!" growls Thayne. "What force is greater than the tarrasque itself?"



"The sorceries that stopped the beast!" you exclaim. "I saw how the sorcerer-kings trapped the tarrasque inside the temple. That's the secret we must hide from Arno at all costs. We would never be able to stop him if he knew that secret."

You describe the frightening scenes of death and devastation wrought throughout ancient Bhukod by the ravaging tarrasque. This time, you omit nothing that you've seen in the crystal, including a detailed description of the Robe of

the Archmagi. By the time you conclude the story, your companions are gazing at you with troubled expressions. You know you lack the narrative skills of a bard, but you hope you were able to tell the tale convincingly.

Roll two dice and add the result to your charisma skill score. If the total is 16 or more, turn to 157. If it is less than 16, turn to 64.

70

"This shaft curves back toward the ruins," you observe, *"which probably means that it leads to the underground temple."*

Fighting the stench of decay by taking shallow breaths, you clutch at the mossy material of the shaft's walls and begin to lower yourself into the depths of the shaft. The sceptre's light is constant, perhaps even a bit brighter as you reach the first turn in the vertical tunnel and look over your shoulder.

Just as the tunnel begins to slope more gently, allowing you to walk downhill by holding on to the mossy material on the walls of the shaft, a strange voice begins to clamor in your head.

"You will be ours before nightfall!" it says, popping into your mind like a malicious whisper.

At first, you think your imagination is playing tricks on you, but the next two messages are more to the point.

"Put out the light so we can find you," another voice pleads urgently.

"And so that you can find us!" adds a second telepathic speaker.

You freeze where you are, sensing movement in the tunnel below. Thrusting the sceptre forward, you spot a shadowy figure darting away from the light.

"BRIGHT! BRIGHT!" screams another voice in your head. You hear the muffled sound of movement from above you and turn just in time to thrust your glaring weapon into the face of an inhuman creature with the pincers and mandible of an ant-lion—a meenlock! You try to swing your enchanted staff toward yet another of the underground monsters, but the sides of the shaft are too narrow to allow

you to turn freely with the weapon.

You grab frantically for one of your darts that is tipped with a powerful druid sleep poison, but a pincer grips your wrist and tears the Sceptre of Bhukod from your hand. In your struggle to fight the creatures in the ensuing blackness, you scratch your thumb on the dart, plunging yourself mercifully into coma before the meenlocks do what they enjoy most. ✘

71

"I suggest we use full sails and run straight on. With luck, we'll be on the beach before they can get reinforcements from the town guard."

"You heard him," says the captain to his first mate. "Get every scrap of canvas on this ship up there, and tell the other vessel what we're doing!"

In just minutes, every crewman aboard the galley is on deck. Lines and sails are dangling everywhere, and men are hanging from yardarms and shrouds like human spiders. Soon, the bows of both vessels are knifing like giant geese through the brightly lit water of Saven Bay toward the small beach that lies in mid-harbor.

By the time the galleys are directly under the blinding light source, the wharf is lined with armed soldiers, just as you knew it would be.

"There's something strange going on!" says Dalris, her eyes squinting in the glare. "They're not drawing their weapons. It's almost as if they were watching a boat race!"

"I sense great evil here!" Garn blurts. "It's coming from the water itself! It—"

The paladin's words halt in mid-sentence as a giant mass of seawater rises in front of your vessels and rushes like a tidal wave straight toward you!

"It's an olhydra!" shouts the captain. "It'll ram us! Brace yourselves!"

Before you have time to think, a blast of cold water crushes your chest and washes you overboard. In your dying consciousness, you see that the evil water creature has shattered the hulls of both galleys as if they were toy ships. ✘



72

Before Arno has a chance to resist, the dweomer of your Sleep spell overpowers him. Your rival collapses instantly on the ground in front of the shattered granite slab. With your principal enemy unconscious, it seems that your quest for the Robe of the Archmagi may now be easier because you no longer need to guard the temple from Arno.

You start to tie him up but then decide against it. *He might wake up if I touch him. I suppose I should either kill him (59) or take a chance and just leave him here while I search for the Robe of the Archmagi (120).*

73

While Garn was warning you about sensing evil, you were already pinpointing it with your own even-stronger Detect Evil spell. The source of malevolent auras is far to the right of Dalris and Garn rather than to the left where the winged creature is materializing!

Both Dalris and Garn leap away from the nimble creature, swords drawn and ready to fight for their lives. Thayne comes running forward, his mithral pickaxe poised for action.

Sensing no evil in the mysterious creature, you step boldly in front of all of them.

"Stop!" you command. "This is not an enemy!"

Turn to 109.

74

You step away from the flaming entrance to the Temple of Power and focus your mind upon the image of Arno fleeing into the dark entry chamber. Fixing the image of the half-drow's silver hair and jet black face in your thoughts, you recite the Teleport incantation:

"Rulers of the material world and its dimensions! I ask you to transport my physical being into the location conjured in my thoughts!"

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is more than 33, turn to 195. If the total is between 27 and 33, turn to 68. If it is less than 27, turn to 181.

Because Arno surprised you, it would be difficult to cast an offensive spell without his being prepared to counter it. Instead, you turn toward the shattered boulder in the archway and start to cast a permanent spell that will bar Arno from entering the ruins.

If you still haven't used your Wall of Fire (189), Wall of Force (207), or Web (160) spells, now might be a good time to use one of them to replace the Wizard-Locked barricade you destroyed.

Select any one of these spells so long as it's still unused, and cross it off your List of Spells. Then turn to the section indicated.

Deciding not to use your unpredictable Teleport or Wish spells, you hurriedly sweep away the remaining cobwebs from the dark opening in the clay bank and begin to crawl downward. You remove the Sceptre of Bhukod from its fur case and use its brilliant light for a beacon.

Only a short way inside the shaft, the walls turn to gravel and rock, making your progress somewhat more painful. Your right leg is cramping badly, and you try to twist it outward to relieve the muscle tension. When you do, you kick one of the larger stones and dislodge it from the moist clay. A whole section of the shaft caves in behind you, blocking the exit and sealing you in Landor's secret entrance to the Temple of Power.

Pushing that thought from you, you extend the Sceptre of Bhukod in front of you to see what lies ahead. The enchanted light spreads, revealing a dark hole no more than twenty feet away. It appears to be an opening into some kind of large chamber.

Turn to 56.

You realize quickly that you can't ask your companions to abandon their detailed plans for the invasion of Tikan-dia. You twist your head back to face them and slam your fist decisively on the desk.

"We can't afford to delay our invasion another day!" you exclaim. "The Knights of Truth have Dalris's kinsmen trapped in those deadly marshes. If we don't draw Arno's forces away from them, they'll die in that hellish place, and Arno's bumbling magic might even release the tarrasque."

Dalris looks troubled, but before she can speak, Thayne claps loudly at your suggestion.

"HA! Now you're sounding like your father!" exclaims the misshapen elf. "This is what we've been waiting for—Landor's and Carr's great powers versus the evil sorcery which blankets Tikandia like a fog!"

"We are still too few," Garn warns. "Arno's paladins will outnumber us four-to-one!"

"Then we'll have to choose our landing site with the greatest care," Thayne replies. "I say we attack by the back door after dark, on the Wealwood coast. That way, I can get my rangers into the highlands during the night. Then we'll retake the Archdruid's shrine before breakfast!"



Garn stiffens and angrily demands, "Are we thieves? Do we fear the evil Arno has summoned to Tikandia so much that we must crawl like reptiles into our own homeland? I find your suggestion distasteful, Thayne. Our original plan was to take Saven in a frontal assault, and I see no reason to change it now. The marshes are the same distance from Wealwood and Saven. It would take as long to rescue the Kandians and confront Arno either way."

Seeing Thayne about to defend his plan, Dalris stands tiredly and raises her hands between the paladin and the elf-svirfneblin. "Stop it, both of you! I've been smuggling refugees out of Kandia for the past ten years and know that Arno has the eastern coast guarded very well. Garn, it'd be

impossible to land a sizeable invasion force anywhere without his knowing about it."

She nods toward you with a frown. "Carr has to make the decision. He's the only one who has a chance against Arno's power. Aerdrie's crown may have won us Seagate Island, but its power won't help us on the mainland."

"She's right," Thayne mumbles. "Carr's own powers are our only chance against Arno's wizardry. We have to land wherever his power is weaker. How about it, Carr? Do we land on the Kandian coast (80) or at Saven (57)?"

78

You have decided to use your Infravision spell to give you a clearer picture of your surroundings. Intermittent patches of warmth on the horizon appear as red light to you. You can make out the forms of crew members on the ship you just came from and that of a few people on shore, but you are surprised by the lack of activity in and around what is usually a busy port town.

Looking alongside your boat, you can even make out the dull red forms of hundreds of fish, moving through the water. You are about to scan the horizon again when the many schools of fish visible beneath your dinghy fan out and flee the area en masse. Nearby, a huge, super-hot form is glowing in the water. The area of red is so large and bright that you wonder if it might not be a volcanic vent at the bottom of the sea, but then it moves, in fact pushes toward you, and you realize that the impossibly big mass has to be an olhydra—one of the most deadly monsters of the deep.

A shudder runs through you as you recognize the implications of the situation: that the enemy you face is so powerful that he must have somehow managed to summon the creature to guard this harbor. "Paddle for your lives!" you yell to the others in the boat. "There is a monster beneath us! Hurry!"

You know that the olhydra could emerge and capsize your small vessel on a whim, but it apparently must be confining its watch to a limited part of the harbor because it does not pursue you. You realize, nonetheless, that a direct attack on the port would be doomed. You will have to skirt the

harbor and sneak into the area from another route (25), or abandon this approach entirely and move on to the Yellow Marsh (13).

79

Alerted by the unusual noises coming from the rear of the temple mound, you focus your Detect Evil dweomer on the woods at the back of it. Almost immediately, your senses begin reeling with the heavy sensation of malevolence coming from nearer than the sounds you heard. The aura of evil is so definite that you can almost pinpoint it beside a large tree just across from the archway.

If your Detect Invisibility spell is active, turn to 119. If not, turn to 130.

80

"You know the fishing villages along the mainland coast better than anyone," you tell Dalris. "The villages are well-guarded by Arno's men, but they probably spend most of their time trying to catch smugglers like you. They won't be expecting a full-scale invasion. If we time our landing for the early morning hours, we should be able to take them by surprise. It'd be daylight before reinforcements could arrive from Wealwood grove."

"We'll be in Wealwood by then!" boasts Thayne. Either the svirfneblin body or his brief death before he was transformed seems to have altered the ranger's personality, making him a bit brasher than most mountain elves.

Dalris eyes you suspiciously. Finally, she raises a dark eyebrow and speaks. "Did I hear you say 'we,' magician?" she asks with a lazy smile. "Is the great Magus Delling of College Arcane finally going to leave his cozy seaside hideaway? Aren't you a little afraid to go where the magical solars controlled by your crown can't function? You'll be at the mercy of demons like Pazuzu."

Your only reply to her teasing sarcasm is a smile of your own. Then you stand painfully and wave toward the door. "I'm sure the three of you will have things to do before we sail for the mainland tomorrow night. Rufyl and I have a few preparations of our own to make before then."

Thayne and Garn leave quickly, anxious to surprise their waiting fighters with the news of your plans. As you shut the door with your Unseen Servant spell, Dalris turns and gives you a final, very puzzled glance.

If you've already summoned Rufyl, turn to 116. If you haven't, turn to 9.

81

"They'd never be expecting anyone to come by way of Citadel Rock," you tell Garn and Dalris. "I'll surprise them with a trick or two from the top of the rock. Be ready to hit them when you hear things start happening."

You stand shakily in the prow of the dinghy, preparing yourself to cast Spider Climb, one of your most familiar spells. The long and tedious trip from the galley has stiffened your injured hip and you flex your leg to get the circulation going again.

Dalris looks at you with concern and whispers, "Don't do this, Carr! That would be a difficult climb for someone in perfect condition. Your mountaineering days are over, my friend. Come with us!"

You're warmed by the bard's concern for your safety, but you wave her aside and turn to face the sheer wall of Citadel Rock.

To prepare for the spell's effects, you remove your sandals and place them in an inner pocket of your Cloak of Elvenkind. With practiced movements, you uncork the tiny two-part vial containing tar and live spiders. Swiftly daubing a drop of tar on your index finger, you then shake the vial so that one of the spiders tumbles into the black goo. Then you lick the tar from your finger and swallow the struggling arachnid while whispering the Elvish spellwords to cast Spider Climb.

Add 1 point to your charisma skill score because your companions appreciate bravery. Then roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 27 or more, turn to 26. If it is less than 27, turn to 67.

82

The classic way to bypass a Wizard Lock is to use a Knock spell. You concentrate upon the seal around the gray boulder, waiting until the dweomer of the Knock spell reaches

its maximum strength in your mind. At precisely the right moment, you mutter the familiar Elvish spell phrase.

"Nutush!"

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 26 or more, turn to 174. If it is less than 26, turn to 60.

83

"Who in hell do you think you are, casting spells on your friends?" shouts Thayne as soon as he realizes what you're doing. "Are you so enamored with your own power that you don't trust us to decide this for ourselves?"

You look at the little figure before you, seeing behind the ugly deep-gnome body the elven ranger-wizard who was your first mentor. He lost much of his own magical power when he died after grabbing the fabled Sceptre of Bhukod. Archdruid Perth, Dalris's father, was able to resurrect your former tutor, but only as a svirfneblin, a small, dark, gnarled creature usually found only in the dark, deep mines. The alteration left Thayne without occult power but did not affect his memory, so Thayne can no longer use magic, but his knowledge of it remains intact.

Garn shakes his head to clear it of the effects of your ineffective Suggestion spell and demands, "What was he doing?"

Dalris sneers angrily and levels her finger at you. "He was afraid we weren't going to see things his way, so he decided to use a little magical insurance. What was it, Magus Delling? Your Friends spell? Or perhaps Charm Person?"

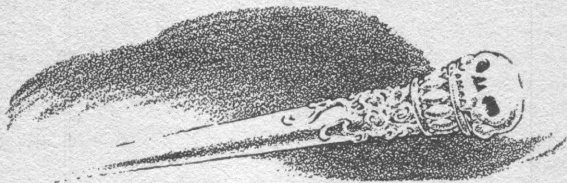
"I find that hard to believe!" exclaims Garn. For all his experience, the paladin is naive in many ways. You give him a grim smile.

"I'm afraid it's true, Garn. I have good reasons for believing that a mass invasion is the wrong thing to do. I was afraid that you wouldn't listen if you knew that those reasons have to do with magic."

"And you were right!" storms Dalris. "You've just made up my mind for me. We invade Tikandia just as we've been planning—with as many fighters as we can muster! That sea'll be a desert before I believe you again, Carr Delling!"

"Calm yourself, Dalris," urges Garn in reasonable tones. "We still need Carr's knowledge, as well as his magic." He turns back toward you. "Do you know anything that would make one invasion site better than the other, Carr?"

The coolness beneath the paladin's reasonable voice tells you that he, too, won't forget for quite a while your attempt to manipulate your friends. Deduct 2 points from your charisma skill score. Then turn to **57** if you think the main city of Saven is the better invasion site, or to **80** if you prefer Wealwood, the Archdruid's grove, on the coast beyond Yellow Marsh.



84

You cannot ignore the telltale pulses of the Sceptre of Bhukod. You take a last cursory glance around the temple entrance, then begin walking slowly around the perimeter of the mound toward its rear. The glow of the pearls becomes more intense with each step you take.

When you reach the opposite side of the mound, however, the sceptre continues to lead you to the east, away from the temple entrance.

It's taking me toward Wealwood! you realize suddenly. Sure enough, the first trail you discover is one that leads straight into Archdruid Perth's province. You hold the pearl-topped end of the enchanted wand out in front of you again because you find it difficult to believe that it's leading you out of the marsh, but the pulsating glow is stronger than ever.

On the outskirts of the druid's settlement of Wealwood, the signal from the sceptre is so strong and constant that you can no longer detect any changes in it. The three pearls are ablaze with an inner glow that even in sunlight almost hurts your eyes.

You place the wand back in its protective sheath slung across your back, feeling its surging power against your back even through the casing and your thick cloak. Then you start searching along the boundary between Wealwood and Yellow Marsh for anything unusual.

If your Detect Evil spell is active, turn to 5. If it is not, turn to 30.

85

Your Fly spell is one of your favorite incantations, one you've practiced many times. You race for the edge of Citadel Rock, launching yourself into the night at the same you wave—and drop!—a tiny white feather. In your panicked search for another component, you forget that you might be able to save yourself by using Levitate.

At least it looks as if you'll warn your friends of danger by crashing to the ground between them and the half-orcs. ✕

86

The dweomer of the Fly spell causes your body to tremble. You let the vibrations mount until they peak, carrying you off the deck. . . . But not far enough off! Your body tilts and you crash headfirst into the railing of the quarterdeck. The jeers of the sailors are the first sensations you have when you clear your stunned mind.

"Was that a bird, or a wizard, mates?"

"Maybe it was a mage-pie!"

Then you see Garn's armored shoulders looming over you. "Are you hurt badly?" he asks as he helps you to your feet.

"Just his head," says Dalris, "and it's far too hard to break. Now let's try something more sensible!"

Deduct 1 point from your charisma skill score and 1 hit point. Then turn to 95.

87

Your mission is much too important, and you're much too weak to risk hand-to-hand confrontation with the dark elf. Before Arno can say or do anything more, you flip the cowl

of the Cloak of Elvenkind forward and disappear. The wizard's expression turns to rage as he realizes that you have eluded him again.

"Listen to me, Delling!" he calls to the four walls. "I know about the Robe of the Archmagi, and I know where it is! You can follow me there, if you can. It's behind the Wall of Force dweomer on the other side of the altar."

You were already in the corridor when Arno issued his challenge. You come back to the doorway just in time to see the black half-drow vanish from view in front of the shimmering blue panel.

Turn to 20.

88

Though the bard has become increasingly impatient with your all-consuming interest in magic, Dalris has never accused you so fiercely of cowardice. You doubt that she will believe your true motives if you describe the power of the Robe of the Archmagi.

"Stealth is the best way to infiltrate Arno's lines. If we can reach your Kandian resistance fighters in Yellow Marsh, Dalris, we can split Arno's forces in the middle and cut the highlands off from both the coast and the city. Then the resistance fighters will be free to rebuild their forces in the highlands."

The bard's dark eyes narrow in a combination of suspicion and hope. Her lips clench tightly, as if she's trying hard to hold back a reply until she's had time to consider what you've said.

Your reason, of course, is a lie, but you hope that Dalris will never discover it. . . . Besides, maybe things will work as you suggest.

Roll two dice and add the result to your charisma skill score. If the total is 18 or more, turn to 157; if it is less than 18, turn to 64.

89

Casting the sceptre's light around the walls of the cavernous room, you see that there's only one exit, a gaping rectangular hole where a pair of massive bronze-bound

double doors has been ripped from the hinges. Suddenly your memories of what you saw in the scrying crystal tell you where you are, and your heart begins to pump faster.

This is the hall where the last of Bhukod's lesser priests boarded themselves up alive to lure the monster away from the archmagi who still needed time to prepare their ultimate magic. Just as you're recalling the more hideous images of that episode, a low, rumbling growl sends an immediate chill through your entire body. The sound comes from the gaping doorway and reverberates in the empty chamber around you, magnifying your sense of terror. Then you hear another growl, followed by the sound of an unmistakably human voice groaning. You're not the only living person in the tomb of the tarrasque!

If you want to investigate the sounds you've just heard before you continue your exploration of the lost temple, turn to 140. If you think it would be wiser to avoid a fight you aren't yet part of, turn to 183.

90

Before you attempt to read the inscription around the arch, you decide to use your Detect Magic spell. You know of several traps used in connection with such glyphs and want to avoid enchantments that cause the runes to explode or even to cast spells upon the reader.

You feel the energy of the detection spell flow instantly from your brain into your arms and hands. It then bursts from your fingertips in a swirling pale blue dweomer that dances over every detail of the inscription and the entire surface of the granite slab. There is nothing magical about the ancient symbols, but you do see a blindingly bright yellow-white line along the crevice of the sealed door. The intensity of the pulsating dweomer is so great that you can hardly look at it.

That must be the permanent Wizard Lock placed upon the slab by the sorcerer-kings! you think, marveling at the strength of the spell after such a long time.

You start to turn away from the blinding light, but see yet another dweomer being revealed by your Detect Magic spell. This time, a brief message is appearing in flaming



red-orange glyphs on the granite slab itself. The characters are in modern Common rather than the ancient Elvish used by the Bhukodian magi, and you can tell from their color that they're both weaker and newer than the Wizard Lock dweomer. The inscription seems to be a warning inscribed by some later magic-user with a simple Wizard Mark alteration. Then you feel tears forming as you read the name of the sorcerer:

**"THIS ENTRANCE IS FORBIDDEN—HEED OR DIE!
LANDOR"**

There's no doubt about the hand that inscribed the terse but important message. Your father's secret symbol, the High Elvish glyph for the word "knowledge," is etched above his name in the same Wizard Mark dweomer.

As the aura of your Detect Magic spell fades, your mind races, trying to understand the meaning of Landor's message. You're so familiar with his writing that you know he never wastes words. In such a small statement, even the word "this" must have great meaning, since every glyph of magical writing requires so much effort and energy from the magic-user.

It's obvious that the slab hasn't been disturbed. You conclude that Landor himself never used this entrance to the temple of Bhukod, yet you know that he discovered the Sceptre of Bhukod and the Sorcerer's Crown inside it. There must be another way in and out of the ruins that even Shanif doesn't know about!

If you decide to ignore the marid's command and try to find another way to enter the Temple of Power, turn to 121. If you think it would be better to maintain your post at the arch, turn to 143.

91

You dislike using your Teleport spell because it's so unpredictable. You know, however, that it will probably be the fastest way for you to follow Arno. With the tarrasque dead, your only concern now is to prevent the half-drow from finding and acquiring the use of the powerful Robe of the Archmagi.

Despite the danger of not specifying a location, you focus

your thoughts on Arno himself and recite the memorized incantation:

"Rulers of the material world and its dimensions! I ask you to transport my physical being into the location conjured in my thoughts!"

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is more than 33, turn to 170. If the total is between 27 and 33, turn to 202. If it is less than 27, turn to 192.

92

"To take you to the Temple of Power, of course," replies the beast directly into your brain, *"but just you, son of Landor, for we must travel too quickly for your friends to follow. It is essential that you come with me immediately. My master must leave the temple, and only Landor's heir may guard it in his absence."*

"Don't trust him, Carr!" warns Dalris.

"Why should he not trust me, bard of Kandia? Can you know what is in my mind just as I know what is in yours? Your concern for Magus Delling is touching, but I assure you that neither you nor he need fear me."

"Ask him why Shanif is leaving his task in Yellow Marsh to guard the temple," Rufyl suggests with his own telepathy. *"Master Landor would never have permitted it."*



"Ah, the noble Rufyl speaks to his lord wizard! You should know, brother familiar, that we never know the true motives of our masters, and would not tell if we did! If Lord Shanif wishes your master to know such a thing, he will send the thoughts into his brain."

If you decide to go with the opinicus, turn to 42. If you decide not to take a chance, turn to 48.

In your haste to protect the gaping entrance to the Temple of Power, you mispronounce two of the key words in the Wall of Fire evocation. You realize instantly what happened and reach into your cloak for another component.

"Bumblng Seagate bookworm!" shouts Arno. "Have some of these components! *Ruspall*!"

You dive for the ground at the instant you hear the dreaded Magic Missiles spellword. You know they'll hit you, but you can control where they strike your body if you're quick enough. Five of the bullet-shaped missiles of pure energy streak into your side and leg!

Roll 2 dice. If your permanent Protection from Evil spell is active, subtract 2 from the result. Either way, deduct the adjusted result from your current hit points for a new hit-point total and turn to 152—if you're still alive, that is!

You are expecting to find yourself transported to a gate or a passageway and are more than a little surprised when Jarmel suddenly appears before you.

"*I have little time to help you,*" explains the opinicus in a mental note. "*Your magic summoned me here, but my master is in grave danger in a battle against Pazuzu's allies, the githyanki. Neither he nor I can help you fight the wizard Arno or the beast within the temple, but I must give you a message from your father, entrusted to my master long ago.*"

"My father?" you ask, amazed. "How could he have known I would be here?"

"*You and I both know that wizards have their ways. Time is wasting.*" Even as the opinicus speaks, you realize that you are being transported, by no force of your own, to the inside of the temple.

"*Your father foresaw your struggle and told us to give you one piece of advice: you must combine your forces with your enemy to slay the beast within the temple. Know that your strength will come when you combine the crown, the sceptre, and the robe to fight the forces of evil.*"

"Join forces with my enemy? How can I possibly work with Arno?"

"Your wish is fulfilled, Carr Delling, as is my mission. I cannot leave my master alone any longer." Jarmel disappears as suddenly as he came, and you are left in a dark passageway. You sense that the Sceptre of Bhukod is responding to the magically charged environment, and you pull it from its case. It is glowing a brilliant white that eliminates the darkness like a Light spell.

You can see now that the gently sloping passage you are in empties into some kind of cavernous chamber only thirty or forty yards away. You turn and look behind you and realize that there is no exit. Your father must have gotten into the temple with help, too. The realization comes slowly that you are now sealed inside the Temple of Power with a tarrasque that hasn't eaten in nearly five centuries!

You pause for a moment to clear your head of hundreds of whirling thoughts and then take the time to decide which of your personal spells you should activate. Mark each spell you select as "Active" on your List of Spells. Remember to deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score for each newly activated spell. Then turn to 56.

95

"We'd better just use an old-fashioned spyglass," you say. The three of you stand in silence as the glow over Saven looms larger.

"I can see the lights!"

Dalris's hail stirs everyone, even Rufyl who cracks a heavy eyelid. Just as she said, the bright lights of the port are now clearly visible dead ahead.

"Give me the glass!" you tell the pilot.

What you see of Saven through the lens disturbs you even more than the glow you first saw on the horizon. No matter how hard you stare, you can see no sign of life in the entire waterfront area! An oval disk of light is hovering over the huge cove in which Saven's wharf was built.

"That's a Continual Light spell!" you announce. "Arno must be using it to guard the port. Not even a piece of driftwood could get past that dweomer without being spotted—There's a detachment of guards running along the quay. They've seen us!"

"What now?" asks Dalris.

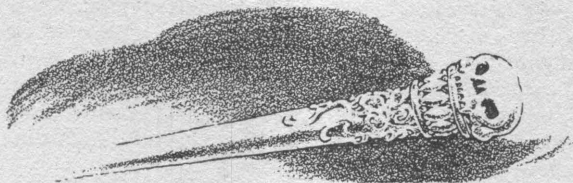
You realize now that your only two chances to proceed with the invasion are either to ignore the Continual Light spell and sail full-speed for the beach (71) or to veer off and try to make the Wealwood coast before sunrise (100).

96

The aura of evil is so strong around the opening of the mossy shaft that you decide not to climb down it. You turn away and begin to work your way toward the coastal road along the boundary between Wealwood and Yellow Marsh. Your attention is glued to a clay bank on the marsh side of the boundary—a bank that is overgrown with ivy and weeds. You're poking the tip of your staff into a curious opening when a voice suddenly appears in your brain.

"You've violated our lair. You must come to us!"

You leap away from the embankment, expecting to see something emerge from the hole, only to back into the creature that has followed you from the mossy shaft! It's a meenlock, an ugly blend of human and ant-lion, and it is waiting, pincers and mandibles at the ready, to push you back to its lair.



"Trope gahn!" you shout, commanding your enchanted staff to grow. As the familiar rose-colored aura envelopes the bronzewood stick, you whip it forward and smash the creature's head with a vicious blow. The meenlock crumples to the ground, but you see more of the subterranean monsters pouring out of the shaft behind it.

Suddenly a large animal materializes from nothing beside you! It's Jarmel, the marid's opinicus familiar! As soon as the meenlocks see the telepathic beast, they freeze in their tracks, as if they recognize it. They then hurriedly re-

treat into their lair, pulling a circular slab into place over the hole after them.

"I see that you have discovered your father's secret entrance into the ruins of Bhukod," Jarmel thinks into your brain.

The thought makes your skin tingle. You turn from the opinicus and start ripping the ivy and weeds away from the cobweb-encrusted hole in the embankment. You wisk the webs away from the opening and crawl into it, peering cautiously into the thick, musty darkness.

Realizing that you'll need a light, you back out of the hole and stand in front of the opinicus. Turn to 49.

97

The chamber of the archmagus's lich is so tiny that the vile creature would be upon you instantly if you tried to cast one of your more powerful spells on it.

If I can stun it with my staff and darts, I might buy enough time to use a spell! you think desperately.

"Trope gahn!" you command your enchanted druid's staff. Instantly a rose-colored aura surrounds the bronze-wood staff as it extends to twice its normal length. You lunge at the undead monster, thrusting the staff like a lance into the creature's midsection.

To your horror, the staff's end sinks immediately through the Robe of the Archmagi, all the way to the lich's back, as if there were nothing at all inside the powerful garment! Your darts with the druid sleep poison would be equally useless against a creature such as this.

"Why do you stare, thief?" demands the lich in a crackling voice as dry as an ancient parchment. Suprisingly, it speaks in modern Common. "You've entered my domain to steal something from me. Now I shall take what is rightfully mine—the item your father stole from me which you call the Sceptre of Bhukod!"

The lich's demand for the sceptre makes you remember its power to absorb and reflect magical energy. If you want to try to use the sceptre to protect yourself against the lich, turn to 104. If you'd rather risk leaping through the blue, glowing wall of energy behind you, turn to 126.



98

The testing of Lander's components continues into the afternoon. The stack of discarded pages is much thicker than the one of usable spells. However, you finally lace the chosen parchment leaves between the thin covers of your father's traveling spellbook.

"These will have to do," you murmur to Rufyl.

"They may be more than you can handle, Master. The Time Stop spell worried even Lander. I recall—"

"I don't have time for reminiscences, Rufyl," you say, interrupting the nervous beast. "Each hour, Arno draws closer to the ruins of Bhukod. These untried spells are our only hope to keep him from unleashing the tarrasque upon Tikandia once again."

"Then the beings called Arno and Pazuzu know about the tomb of the tarrasque?" There is a tremulous quality in Rufyl's hesitant thought.

"I'm not sure. I know only that Arno's so-called knights are converging on Yellow Marsh. We must be there to stop them before they release the monster from its prison, even by accident."

"Surely the marid, Shanif, won't let that happen. Lander commanded him to guard the tomb against sorcerers. You must have been near it that time you ran into him in Yellow Marsh."

You vividly remember meeting the giant djinnlike creature from the Elemental Plane of Water. He seemed capable of anything, but . . . "Perhaps he cannot guard against demons like Pazuzu. I'm beginning to understand why the demon prince has spared no efforts to dominate Arno and the Knights of Truth, even though Arno thinks that it is *he* who controls the demon prince. Pazuzu must somehow need their strength to release the tarrasque. I'm not sure

why, but I think that's the reason he favors Arno."

The pseudodragon's telepathic mind is silent for a moment while it probes your thoughts. You let the images you saw in the crystal flow into the familiar's brain, including every detail involving the Robe of the Archmagi.

"So, my friend," you finally say, "you see why we must stop Arno before he opens the lost temple. The tarrasque would be disastrous enough, but the Robe would make Arno an invincible evil sorcerer."

"But if Pazuzu destroys you . . ."

"Then the tarrasque will ravage Tikandia once again, and Arno will reign supreme over its leavings," you say expressionlessly. "We must do what we can with these incantations and their components."

"Those are dangerous spells, Master, and even more dangerous ingredients!" he warns. *"Landor himself would not have carried all of them at the same time because of their power. Besides, you have not learned the formulas."*

"These are desperate times, Rufyl. We do what we must and hope it is enough."

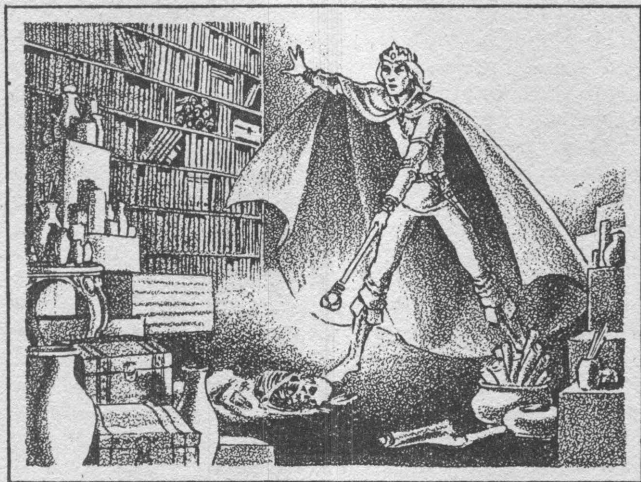
If you've chosen to make a frontal invasion of the city of Saven, turn to 4. If you want to try to slip undetected into Yellow Marsh, turn to 19. If you've decided to send an invasion force to the coast near Wealwood, turn to 38.

99

When the teleportation sensation begins to subside, you find yourself in a strange little room that is softly lit by a shimmering wall of glowing blue energy.

The spell has transported you to a small laboratory of some kind. Books and scrolls line the walls, while shelves are stacked with jars, vials, boxes, and pouches of every size and shape. The labels are yellowed with age but clearly written in the same ancient High Elvish used by the Bhukodian sorcerer-kings.

A stench of decay and filth suddenly fills the chamber. You look around in terror as a horrible undead thing with burning eyes rises from a bench amid a suffocating cloud of dust. The mummified creature wears a thick gray robe similar to your Cloak of Elvenkind. On its head is a tarnished



crown of some dark metal, perhaps adamantite.

Your eyes widen in terror as you realize that this must be the undead lich of the last sorcerer-king of Bhukod! He has survived the past five centuries on the strength of his own great powers and those of the robe he wears—the Robe of the Archmagi!

“Get away from me!” you scream, as the undead monster extends a bony hand toward you. You know you should think of a spell to cast, but all you can think of is fear!

You glance at the shimmering blue wall behind you and start inching your way back toward it. Then you remember your weapons. If you wish to attack the lich with your enchanted staff and sleep darts, turn to 97. If you want to use the Sceptre of Bhukod, turn to 104. If you’d rather just run through the energy field, turn to 126.

100

“I don’t like the looks of that light,” you tell the captain. “It’s much larger than any Continual Light dweomer I’ve ever seen. Do you think we could get to the Wealwood coast before a messenger could get there by road from Saven?”

"Aye, easy enough," says the mariner. "The road from Saven to Wealwood passes through Yellow Marsh and nobody in his right mind is going through that cursed place at night. Even if they did, the sea route's faster."

"Can we get there by daybreak?" asks Garn.

The captain looks first at the hourglass by the wheel, then at the starless black sky, then at the sails. "We might, if the wind stays this good," he finally replies.

"Then that's our plan," you announce. "We invade the Wealwood coast. Since that's your home ground, Dalris, we'll let you tell us where to land."

An expression of keen anticipation and enjoyment comes on the bard's excited face. "Set your course for Citadel Rock, Captain!"

Turn to 159.

101

You didn't expect such a negative reception of your plan to slip secretly into Yellow Marsh. You twist away from your companions' angry and puzzled eyes, using the turning motion to thrust your right hand into a hidden fold of your robe. Palming a tiny ball of beeswax and powdered viper's tongue, you whirl around to face them again.

Your hand rises to your chin in a gesture of contemplation, allowing you to toss the magical ingredient into your mouth. Then you mutter the twin spellwords, "*Mafran, mafran*," while you swallow the snake's tongue.

"Don't you see that Yellow Marsh is the most important corridor into Tikandia?" you challenge them. "If we can join forces with the Kandian guerrillas, we can control the coastal road and cut off the highlands from both the coast and the city."

Cross Suggestion off your List of Spells. Then roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 32 or more, turn to 157; if it is less than 32, turn to 83.

102

For several seconds after the opinicus leaves, no one says anything. Thayne is the first to break the stunned silence.

"Try to remember everything you saw or heard in

Saven," he urges all of you. "If Arno is involved with dark elves, it might even mean he's fronting an alliance between Pazuzu and the Spider Queen!"

Garn nods at the elf's statement. "One thing I noticed was that the half-orc guards in Saven almost all had skin that was darker than half-orcs' usual complexion. Don't drow have—"

"—inky skin, just like Arno's!" you blurt. "That's the key! He's part drow. That's the strange accent I remember he had at College Arcane, which no one recognized!"

"By Brigit, I think you're right!" Dalris exclaims. "I never thought of it before now, probably because his hair was jet black, too, and dark elves invariably have snow-white hair."

"Dye!" you mutter. "This makes it even more imperative that we get to the ruins before he does! If he finds the Robe of the Archmagi AND serves Lolth and Pazuzu with its powers, the tarrasque may be the least of our worries!"

Your own thoughts are so disturbing that you stop talking and reach for the Sceptre of Bhukod. Pulling the relic from its soft cover, you feel its energy surge in your hand and see the three giant pearls at its head begin to glow. You twist around, holding the sceptre as if it were a divining rod, watching it flare, then subside, then flare again.

"It's indicating that the spirits of its creators will be found to the south," says Dalris.

"Then let's head south!" Thayne exclaims. "The sun's almost up!"

Turn to 133.

103

"Let's save your spell for when we really need it," you reply. "We've got a long night and day ahead of us, and your special healing skills might be more useful after we confront Arno's forces. But thank your gods for me, just the same."

"Why don't you thank them yourself? They'd welcome the attention from the Mage of Seagate, who's not quite as irreverent as he likes to sound. That was a selfless thing you did, refusing to be healed."

"I'll leave the praying to you, paladin. As for the spell, it just makes better sense to wait until we're desperate, because you can only heal wounds once a day. I'm a wizard, not a saint."

Despite your protest, you can see that the paladin still regards your willingness to endure pain rather than jeopardize the mission as a hint of sainthood.

Add 1 point to your charisma skill score; then turn to 137 if your destination is Saven, or to 147 if you plan to try to slip undetected into Yellow Marsh.

104

In a panic, you jerk the casing with the Sceptre of Bhukod open and grasp the heavy golden handle of the precious weapon. As soon as the triple pearls of its head clear the hide sheath, they bring the brightness of the sun into the tiny chamber.

As you shield your eyes from the painful glare, you see the lich reaching for the enchanted wand! You prepare yourself for a surge of energy as the powerful weapon drains the magical undead creature of its life force, just as it sapped Thayne's life force when the elf grabbed the sceptre half a decade ago.

To your surprise—and horror—the lich grasps the sceptre by its bulbous head, covering the three huge pearls with one dried hand. The light of the wand seems to flow into the lich, filling its sunken and skeletal cheeks with living tissue. At the same time, you feel your own body growing weaker. Your skin becomes looser, and your muscles start to shrink away from your bones!

Within minutes, the horrible transition is complete. The lich now stands before you as a healthy man with penetrating dark eyes and glossy black hair. His complexion is unnaturally white, perhaps a relic of the many centuries his spirit has spent inside the temple where he was ordained to serve as both guardian of the Robe of the Archmagi and keeper of the tarrasque.

The rejuvenated archmagus pulls the powerful robe from his shoulders and drapes it over your own helpless, mummified body. Then he tosses the dimming sceptre onto your

dried chest just before he mutters a single secret word and leaves the Temple of Power and its tarrasque to the new guardian of the Robe. ☼

105

"Let's get him out of the city," Garn urges. "If we can find a place to rest, I might be able to do something about those burns. The invasion appears to be a success, but only because Arno's main troops are in the east. We need to start for Wealwood tonight."

Trying not to be a burden, you let your companions lead you swiftly to the eastern boundary of Saven, where the coastal road to Wealwood emerges from Yellow Marsh. You can hear the sounds of battle diminishing both by distance and by degree as you stumble along, led by Dalris and Garn. Thayne, with his excellent svirfneblin infravision, is serving as guide along the heavily forested road.



Finally Garn stops you and says, "Let's stop a minute or two so that I can look at those burns." You feel his hands probing the tender injured tissues with the expert healing knowledge of a professional paladin. "His eyes are all right! They're just singed. It may be a while before he can see clearly, though."

"Can't you use your healing spells, like you do on my leg?"

"I've already done everything I can do," says Garn. "You'll just have to wait now."

If Garn already healed you once aboard the galley, add no hit points. If he has not yet healed you, roll 2 dice and add the result to your current hit points, but do not exceed your original hit points.

Suddenly you hear a whirring sound, like the wings of a giant locust. "What's that?" you cry, as your friends force you to the ground.

"It's the strangest animal I've ever seen!" says Dalris. "It looks like a winged camel with a monkey's head and paws, and it just appeared from nowhere!"

"Look out!" yells Thayne. "It's attacking Carr with some kind of ray!"

You feel a flash of something warm, and then the feeling is gone — but your vision is back, including even your infravision! You raise your hand in front of Thayne to prevent the elf from hitting the beast with his mithral pickaxe.

Turn to 109.

106

Arno thrusts his skull-tipped staff in front of him and pronounces a simple command word just as you hurl the sand. You hadn't anticipated his having reactions that fast when you cast the Sleep spell. A fan-shaped shield of protective magic appears in the air between you and Arno, spoiling your incantation.

Not dwelling on the failure, your mind turns immediately to your next move in this dangerous duel. You might use a forceful spell such as Fireball (201) to penetrate Arno's shield, an alteration spell such as Polymorph Other (178), or assault the protective shield itself with your Dispel Magic (167) spell.

107

You search your mind frantically for an aggressive incantation to cast against the dark wizard. Your most powerful offensive spells are Fireball (12), Polymorph Other (47), Fear (111), and Sleep (177).

Select a spell so long as it's still unused, and cross it off your List of Spells. Then turn to the section indicated.

108

"You could not help my master," Jarmel tells you, sensing the conflict you feel. "The astral plane is dominated by telepathic beings who would destroy you quickly because you

lack telepathic skills. Your mission is here, inside the ruins. You can stop Pazuzu and his evil alliance with the githyanki and the drow by preventing the escape of the tarrasque."

"What 'alliance?' I don't understand!" you cry in frustration and confusion.

The opinicus's wings are already beginning to stir as his reply forms in your mind. *"Pazuzu tricked my master into serving as a mediator between Lolth and Gith, the githyanki leader. They had already decided to split Tikandia between them after the tarrasque destroys all human resistance. The drow get the underground and the githyanki the surface. Arno is merely a tool they're using to open the Wizard Lock."*

Jarmel's hasty explanation provokes more questions—questions about your father's role in the plot, about the Robe of the Archmagi, and many other things, but the opinicus has vanished. The one thing you're sure of is that you need to get back to the temple as quickly as possible!

If you want to transport yourself instantly into the temple, you must use one of your spells, such as Teleport (197), Teleport without Error (161), or Limited Wish (188). Select any one of these spells as long as it's still unused and cross it off your spell list. Then turn to the indicated section. If you know about a secret entrance to the ruins of Bhukod, you may choose to try it instead of magic (76).

109

"Would you slay the one ally you have in this hellish swamp?"

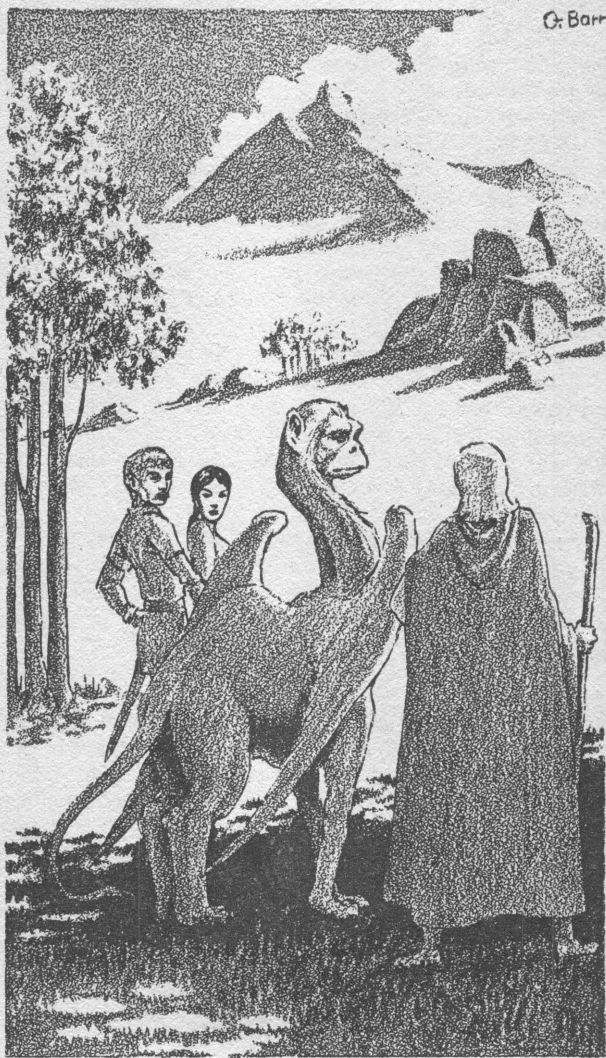
The question thunders in your brain and in those of your companions, but without sound. It reminds you immediately of the telepathic powers of another creature you encountered in Yellow Marsh—the marid called Shanif.

"Excellent, Carr Delling! I am honored to serve Lord Shanif as his familiar!"

"Shanif!" exclaims Dalris. "That's the marid who told us about the twin crowns, Carr!"

Your Infravision spell has surrounded the telepathic speaker with a pulsating yellow glow. You see a large creature with a humped body and an anthropoid head. A pair of brown furry wings are folded against its tawny side, and its paws are prehensile hands.

G. Barr



"I sense no evil from it," whispers Garn.

"*Thank you, paladin,*" the beast projects. "*My race abhors evil. You might even say that we confront it with the vigor of true paladins like yourself—a rare commodity in Tikandia these days.*"

"Who—or what—are you?" you demand.

"It's an opinicus," says Thayne, whose gnomish infravision is much better than yours. "Such multidimensional creatures have spell-like talents that let them step through alien dimensions. I've heard that they may even be capable of ethereal and astral travel."

"*Ah, you know of my race, Thayne of Seagate,*" the beast projects. "*As for your first question, Carr Delling, 'who' will do nicely. My name is Jarmel.*"

"Where did it come from?" demands Rufyl timidly.

"Reassure your familiar that I mean him no harm," the opinicus interjects. "*I can 'be' anywhere I choose. Material dimensions of time and space place few restrictions on me. Humans miss so much with their paltry four dimensions. There are so many forms and shapes you can't experience with your limited senses.*"

"Why has Shanif sent you to find us?" you ask.

If you've just come from Saven, turn to 7. If you've landed secretly in Yellow Marsh to find the temple of Bhukod, turn to 92. If you're scouting the Wealwood coast before an invasion, turn to 58.

110

The shadows at the edge of the Continual Light spell's dweomer appear even darker than they really are because of the blinding glare. It's easier than you thought it would be to maneuver all seven of the dinghies into the shore a few miles east of the lighted harbor.

Thayne's rangers move with silent precision, hiding the boats in the thick weeds at water's edge. They seem to be working by telepathy, but you know that they're just well-trained.

"I wish my men were here," Dalris whispers. "They wanted to be a part of this invasion."

"They will be," you promise her. "As soon as we switch off

that magical light. That'll be the signal for both galleys to enter the harbor."

"Speaking of that, we need some strategy," says Garn, who has been conferring with Thayne and his rangers. "Arno is probably at the cathedral. Do we go there first or surprise the guards at the harbor?"

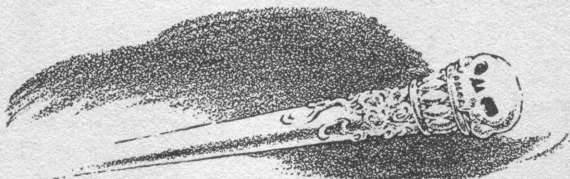
The thought of finally facing your old enemy, the man who has been taking control of Tikandia, makes your scalp tingle. You ponder the paladin's choices carefully, not wanting to let the thrilling idea of combat with Arno force you to make a foolish decision.

If you want to start at the cathedral, turn to 141. If you think you should deal with the guards first, turn to 118.

111

Because Arno surprised you, your Fear spell is not a good choice at all. You fumble beneath your cloak for the single white chicken feather you need to cast the dweomer, which takes your attention away from your powerful rival several seconds too long.

The self-styled Archmagus of Tikandia whispers a quick phrase that you recognize too late to avoid its effects. As soon as the last syllable reaches your ears, you find it nearly impossible to think of anything else.



Arno's Forget spell sweeps your brain of all immediate memories. You find yourself staring dumbly at an archway, unable to recall why you're here or where the pile of rubble at your feet came from. You know that the strange-looking man in the brown velvet robe has some special significance for you, but you can't remember what it is, or why he's smiling at you as he ducks into the gaping archway beside you. It's not a nice smile.

Roll 1 die and deduct the result from your intelligence skill score. Then erase *all* of your activated personal spells and turn to 15.

112

The last time you used a Teleport spell, you ended up inside a tree trunk, which caused irreparable damage to your hip. Hence, you have brought along your father's more advanced incantation, Teleport without Error.

By the light of the Sceptre of Bhukod, you thumb through the pages of your traveling spellbook until you find Lander's formula. As a precaution, you rip it from the book so that the other pages won't be destroyed if something happens to this one. You push the horrifying growls of the tarasque from your mind and concentrate upon the incantation.

"I call upon thee, powers of every plane, to suspend thy laws of being. Erase my existence at this dimensional point in time and recreate it . . ."

In horror, you suddenly realize that you must supply your exact destination. *I should have planned the spell in advance*, you think woefully. *I knew better than to attempt an unfamiliar formula, especially one so . . .*

Your thoughts taper into nothing as does your existence in the material world. ☿

113

"If Dalris has managed to slip through Arno's lines on her refugee runs, we ought to be able to scout the coast without being detected," you tell them. "Until we know where the guards are posted tonight, we'd risk disaster by landing our ships just anywhere."

Garn nods his approval to the signalman and commands him to flash your decision to Thayne's vessel. The hooded lantern blinks rapidly for several seconds, answered by a short sequence of flashes from across the dark water.

"They say, 'Wait for Thayne. Svirfneblin infravision essential,'" reports the signalman.

The elf's message makes you grin. This is exactly the kind of mission that would appeal to Thayne. "I'll wake

Rufyl," you tell Garn. "His telepathic talents are just as invaluable for scouting and spying work as our friend's transplanted gnomish night vision."

While you wait for Thayne to cross the water between the two galleys, you decide that it's time to reactivate your own Infravision. Mark it "Active" on your List of Spells and deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score.

You might also decide to activate some or all of your other permanent spells at this time:

<i>Comprehend Languages</i>	<i>Protection from Evil</i>
<i>Detect Evil</i>	<i>Protection from Normal</i>
	<i>Missiles</i>
<i>Detect Invisibility</i>	<i>Read Magic</i>
<i>Detect Magic</i>	<i>Tongues</i>

Mark each spell you select as "Active" on your List of Spells. Remember to deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score for each activated spell; then turn to 138.

114

"This has nothing to do with you," you tell Dalris. "The success of our mission may depend upon whether or not I can concentrate upon difficult spells I've never used before. Call your gods, Garn. Ask them to fix this leg for a little while."

"I'm going below to join my fighters," says Dalris in scathing tones. "They know about pain, too, but they don't have a private healer to make them feel better." The bard pushes herself roughly past you and Garn, and vanishes among the shadows of the deck.

"I can't understand why you let her think such things about you," says the paladin. "She always seems either to hate you or to adore you, without anything milder between the two extremes. I remember when I first saw you together in Saven, outside the—"

"Were you going to pray or something?" you remind him irritably. "That's one pain that'll take more than your holy powers to handle. Dalris hates magic, so for her, that's the same as hating me. Right now, we've got more important things to worry about just over that horizon!" Once again, you push thoughts of Dalris away.



The paladin smiles sadly and raises a hand. "Pardon my intrusion, Carr. I was speaking as a friend. Whatever goes on between you and Dalris is none of my business."

The holy warrior then places his hand on your right hip, and loses himself in the power of his prayers. The healing energy he draws from his gods forms a glow that streams into your mangled muscles and dulls the ache for another day.

Deduct 1 point from your charisma skill score. Then roll 2 dice and add the result to your current hit points. Under no circumstances may the total hit points exceed the total you started this adventure with. Then turn to 159.

115

Stinking Cloud is one of the easiest to cast among those spells you've memorized, but this time you stumble over the last few words. A tiny cloud of the highly noxious gas spews from your palms, but only circles around you! You clutch your throat and collapse to the ground, gagging painfully until two of the half-orcs gleefully spear you in the chest. ✕

116

For the rest of the night, you scour your own spellbooks, Lantor's personal notes, and his thin traveling spellbook, trying to prepare yourself for confrontations with Arno, Pazuzu, and the tarrasque. Each alone is a formidable opponent, and it's difficult to choose a set of spells that would cover most circumstances. You haven't yet mastered the four most powerful spells in your father's traveling spellbook, but you plan to take the parchments along, just to use as scrolls.

At noon, you become aware of the pseudodragon's return when you receive tired grumblings transmitted telepathically through the heavy portal and directly into your mind.

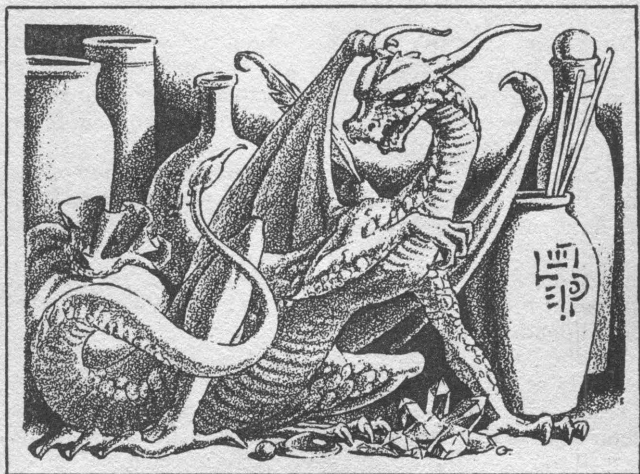
"I cannot open the door, Master."

As your Unseen Servant dweomer admits him, you see immediately that the old familiar has had a difficult time. His bright orange eyes are now dull with fatigue, and he's dragging a bulky sack with both forepaws.

"I could have used some help," he whines as the Unseen Servant dumps the magical components on your desk. *"Do you know how many places I had to go to find these things?"*

"Stop grumbling," you command the beast, knowing that speed is now more important than one tired familiar's feelings. "You alone knew where my father cached these things. We still have to test each one to see if it's still potent enough to work. Come and assist me."

The ancient familiar ruffles his scaly wings in mute protest but approaches the desk as you commanded. With a quick hop, the pseudodragon lands on the polished surface and waits amid the profusion of jars, vials, and pouches for



your instructions. You open the slim traveling spellbook and trace the coded lines with your finger.

"Let's begin with the Dismissal spell," you order. "Did you get the special ingredient I wanted?"

If you summoned Rufyl before your meeting with Dalris, Thayne, and Garn, turn to 129. If you waited until after the meeting to summon him, turn to 139.

117

You feel the surge of power as your Dispel Magic dweomer assaults Arno's protective shield. You feel a great tension for several terrible seconds, then a sudden release as the half-drow's shield gives way.

What you neglected to think about in your hurry to disarm Arno is that shields work two ways. While you were destroying Arno's magical armor, he was preparing something for you.

"*Ruspal!*" He shouts the familiar spellword for the powerful Magic Missiles incantation. Five bullet-shaped torpedoes of pure energy streak into your head and chest, ending all hope of stopping the tarrasque's release. ✕

118

"If we can take the harbor, it won't matter whether we turn that light spell off or not," you tell your companions. "Do you think we have enough men to do the job, Thayne?"

"More than enough!" he exclaims with more confidence than you think is justified.

"Then let's go!" urges Dalris. The barbarian side of the bard is bursting for action. Her shortsword is already in her hand, and her battle-queue dances against her leather-clad shoulders.

Garn draws his holy sword, the one he calls "Soultooth." It gleams with a pale blue aura as he holds it above his armored head.

"To the harbor, men! For Blessed Dian!"

"And for Tikandia!" adds Dalris!

The elven rangers silently fan out across the waterfront. Their figures are as colorless as ghosts in the stark brightness of the Continual Light spell. Arno's orcish watchmen

fail to see them until they've reached the wharves, perhaps because they're expecting invaders to be coming from the bay. There are isolated duels, but the well-trained rangers handle the surprised half-orcs so easily that the "invasion" is over quickly.

"Arno must have thought that the light spell was so much protection that he could leave the harbor relatively unguarded," Garn suggests after learning that the rangers encountered only about fifty watchmen.

"I don't believe that for a minute," says Thayne gruffly. "There's something fishy here, and it's not the fishing boats. Have you interrogated the prisoners?"

"Rufyl's doing that now," you reply. "It won't take long. They won't be able to hide anything from a pseudodragon. I'll see if I can signal our ships that it's safe to land at the piers."

You take a hooded lantern and start toward the watchtower, but Dalris's urgent cry stops you.

"CARR! DON'T! The harbor's trapped!"

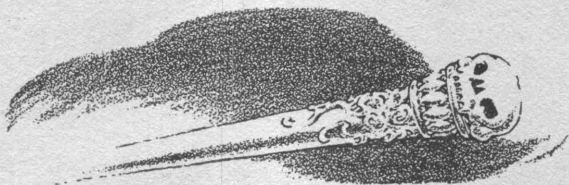
You whirl around and see the bard's lithe figure racing across the sand, with Rufyl's aged form trudging along behind her. The pseudodragon's thoughts reach you even before Dalris can report the results of their interrogations.

"The Continual Light spell is a lure, Master. Arno has commanded an olhydra to guard the harbor. The evil water creature uses the glare of the spell to help her watch the surface of the bay. She destroys anything moving through the light after dark! You must dispel the dweomer before the ships would have a chance to get past the monster and land."

If you want to attempt to cancel Arno's Continual Light spell with your Dispel Magic incantation, turn to 150. If you'd rather find Arno and force him to cancel the spell and dismiss the olhydra, turn to 190.

119

Suddenly you see it! The dark figure of your old nemesis, Arno, is standing in the open beside the large tree just in front of the temple entrance. Your Detect Invisibility spell reveals your rival in fine detail, unknown to him.



The evil wizard, clad in a brown velvet robe, is holding a short club made of polished ebony wood and capped with a carved ivory skull. The only thing that has changed about Arno since you first knew him at College Arcane is his hair. Instead of the matted, coarse black hair you recall, he now has long, fine, silvery-white tresses that gleam in the sunlight and contrast sharply with the coal-black skin of his face. You recognize the dark metal tiara that holds the unusual hair in place—it's the Crown of Lolth, the companion piece to your Sorcerer's Crown which has protected you on Seagate Island.

Your identification of the crown triggers another memory—a description you've studied in Landor's notes and ancient books of dark elves, the malevolent subterranean beings known as the "drow." Every description you've ever read of the evil race corresponds with Arno's appearance, particularly the ebony skin and shocking-white hair.

Arno's a half-drow! you tell yourself. That explains his strange accent, his unwillingness to discuss his background, his devotion to Lolth, perhaps even his association with Pazuzu!

You've also read that dark elves are excellent sorcerers, which explains the skill Arno exhibited from the beginning of his education in things magical.

You are aware that at the moment, both you and Arno are hidden from the nonmagical world by your enchantments, but Arno is looking directly at you; he hasn't made a move toward the temple. That probably means that he has cast a Detect Invisibility spell of his own and is watching every move you make. However, he may not know that you can see him because your face is hidden in the cowl of your magical Cloak of Elvenkind.

If you want to cast a defensive spell and wait to see what Arno will do, turn to 11. If you'd rather take the offensive and cast a more aggressive spell against Arno, turn to 43.

120

Stepping over Arno's unconscious body, you enter the ancient Temple of Power. In your hands, the Sceptre of Bhukod becomes a powerful beacon, lighting your way as surely as the most powerful Light spell. Everywhere you look, there are signs of death and destruction. Crushed and gnawed human bones are scattered through the ruins, but you see no complete skeletons. The ravenous tarrasque has eaten whatever it could find for the past five centuries.

You hear nothing from the depths of the subterranean temple, so you push ahead, letting the sceptre's magical light guide you into the heart of ancient Bhukod. You stay in the widest corridor, ignoring the ransacked rooms with battered doors, and the many intersections of smaller passages. The main corridor ends inside a spacious hall with huge marble columns supporting a gigantic rock slab roof.

Turn to 56.

121

This is definitely not the entrance my father used when he recovered the Sceptre of Bhukod and the Crown of Aerdrie, you think as you examine the ancient Wizard Lock dweomer.

Then you recall the hieroglyphics on the sceptre's handle. Some of them were carved by Landor himself and might contain a clue to the entrance he used to enter the Temple of Power. You hastily remove the enchanted weapon from its furry case and hold its golden shaft to the morning sun to examine it more carefully.

However, as soon as you unwrap the wand's bulbous head of three giant pearls, you lose interest in the carved symbols. All three of the lustrous gems are pulsating with an inner light! You hold the sceptre closer to the archway and are delighted to see the glow intensify and become even more rapid as it points to the interior of the ruins. The wand's energy seems to be reacting to something beyond

the granite slab, and you might be able to use it to find a safer way to enter the Temple of Power.

Holding the magical weapon in front of you as if it were a divining rod, you turn slowly and watch its glowing head change in intensity and rhythm. Surprisingly, the strongest pattern seems to occur whenever you hold the sceptre above your head.

The answer comes in a rush of insight. The sceptre is responding to something behind the arch, and perhaps even behind the temple mound!

Do you want to let the Sceptre of Bhukod's aura lead you away from the temple entrance (84), or would you rather ignore it and remain on guard as the marid commanded (143)?



122

"Call your spirits," you tell Dalris. "The gods of wind and sea are druid gods and your father is their supreme priest. Perhaps they'll listen to you."

The bard nods and steps closer to the rail nearest the Tikandian shore. She raises both hands to the night sky and tilts her finely sculpted native features upward.

"Hear my prayer, Brigit!" she calls. "In the name of my father and our people, the devout guardians of Wealwood, I ask you to send us a strong wind to fill these sails, Holy Goddess. Help us defeat the evil that menaces your people and your land."

The final words of Dalris's prayer hang in the night air for a moment, then die. The only sounds that break the thick silence are the small creaks and groans of yardarms shifting in the gentle sea breeze.

Just as the sailors begin to murmur that her prayer was a failure, a cooler rush of air strikes your cheeks. A sudden great burst of wind belts the decks of both galleys, nearly blowing you overboard! The supernatural wind has such tremendous power that it nearly rips the full sails off their yardarms and propels the ships toward the Tikandian beach with more than enough speed to get them past the sandbar.

You have only a few minutes before the fighting begins to equip yourself with Infravision and any other of your permanent spells you may need:

<i>Comprehend Languages</i>	<i>Protection from Evil</i>
<i>Detect Evil</i>	<i>Protection from Normal</i>
	<i>Missiles</i>
<i>Detect Invisibility</i>	<i>Read Magic</i>
<i>Detect Magic</i>	<i>Tongues</i>

Mark each spell you select as "Active" on your List of Spells. Remember to deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score for each newly activated spell, including Infravision; then turn to 156.

123

"Don't postpone the invasion!" you exclaim. "Rufyl will be my eyes. Take me to the cathedral so that I can confront Arno and dispel the Continual Light spell."

"You heard him. Let's get inside and get this over with!" Thayne's voice sounds more excited than usual. You start to wonder why, but Rufyl responds to your thought even before you can ask.

"Thayne's got the Crown of Aerdrie beneath his armor," reports the pseudodragon. *"He wants to put it on your head when you face Arno, because his Crown of Lolth could never equal the combined power of your Sceptre of Bhukod and the Sorcerer's Crown."*

Suddenly you know why Thayne disappeared for a while earlier—he returned to the hills to fetch the Crown of Aerdrie—the Sorcerer's Crown—from his aunt Estla, the elven matriarch!

You swing the hide pouch from your back and quickly remove the Sceptre of Bhukod. You can't see it, but you can

feel the power of the sceptre surging in your hand, just as you hoped. There's an awkward silence, but Rufyl provides you with an instant account of everything in your companions' minds.

You pause for a moment to let your demonstration have an impact upon them. "Well? Am I fit enough to meet Arno?" When no one replies, you say, "Lead me into the cathedral!"

"The snipers seem to have gone," says Garn from several feet away. "Let's run for the steps."

Dalris grabs your arm and urges you forward, across the rough street. She stops at the main steps to the cathedral and makes sure you don't fall as you climb them.

"The doors are open!" calls Thayne in a husky whisper. "Be careful. It's pitch black in there!"

"The sceptre's flaring!" Dalris exclaims. "Hold it higher, Carr, so we can use it for a torch."

You do as the bard suggests, feeling the most power you've ever felt in the cold metal of the wand's carved handle. The others think of it as a convenient source of light, but you know that it means something more ominous. The sceptre is absorbing the dweomers of spells cast against you from inside in the cathedral—and it seems that there are many sources!

"Be on guard!" Garn warns everyone. "We're surrounded by evil forces!"

"He's right!" you tell them. "I'm being attacked by sorcery right now, but the sceptre's absorbing the energy of the spells. I can't see anything, but I can feel them all around me. I'm trying to cast a spell, but the dweomer just dies inside me!" You hear a faint shuffling sound, then . . .

"Garn and Dalris are dead, Master!"

"They've got the Crown of Aerdrie!" cries Thayne.

Stark terror sweeps over you, emphasizing your lack of sight. From the blackness, you hear a scuffle, then the metallic twang of a crossbow followed by the whistle and thud of a shaft.

"Uhhnn!" Thayne's groan is the last sound you hear from your three companions.

"Master! They're killing us! Do something!"



"Shoot that bloated little creature!" The strange accent reminds you of Arno's speech when he was a student at College Arcane, but this is a female voice. You perceive a searing mental anguish from the pseudodragon, then nothing.

"Guafon ler tepis, Lolth!" says the voice.

Your eyes start to burn and water as soon as the unseen woman utters the phrase. It's definitely a dialect of Elvish, but you can't remember having heard it before. The only word you recognize is "Lolth," the sinister goddess worshipped by drow elves and other evil demihumans. Then your sight begins to return. At first, the images are red and watery, but they soon clear enough to horrify you.

You're in the center of the huge cathedral, surrounded by the bodies of your companions. Dalris and Garn seem to have perished without a struggle, victims of some powerful spell. Rufyl, too, lies dead at your feet, and Thayne, to your horror, kneels as if in sorrowful prayer, his ugly svirfniblin body riddled with feathered crossbow shafts.

Lining the walls are several dozen curious figures—warriors dressed entirely in mesh armor of gleaming ebony adamantite, which matches their coal-black skin. Most of them carry small crossbows and dark daggers of the same hard metal. But it's their hair that verifies their identity for you. Each of the jet-black warriors has a shock of striking silver hair. They're dark elves—the legendary drow!

"I see you know who we are, Carr Delling."

A tall ebony-skinned woman with the same silver hair is standing in front of the altar. She wears a familiar tiara, the adamantite crown of Lolth, and holds its twin, the Crown of Aerdrie, in her hand.

"The Sceptre of Bhukod is useless against a priestess of Lolth," says the woman in her strangely accented Common. "The energy you felt in the sceptre as you entered this place was coming from a few of my warriors who dabble in sorcery. As for your own spells, I've cast a permanent Dispel Magic spell upon you."

You brandish the sceptre toward her, but the triple pearls undergo no changes. "The wand merely protects you against magic, such as the spells of Arno, our half-breed servant. It can do nothing against the power of Lolth. It

was I who restored your sight so that the son of Lander could witness his own execution. It was the very least I could do."

Before you can reply, she speaks again. "Kill him!" ✕

124

"You've been stuck away on Seagate Island too long!" scoffs Arno. "I'm not one of your foolish students. Get out of my way—I'll deal with you after I'm through with this little piece of business!"

"As you wish," you reply to the untrusting half-drow. You flip the hood over your enchanted cloak and melt into the blue-lit background of the chamber like a human chameleon. Both Arno and the tarrasque give a puzzled glance to the spot where you were a few seconds ago. The dark wizard dodges a vicious swipe by the tarrasque, continuing to read the Limited Wish spell as he ducks.

Turn to 132.



125

When you complete the Gust of Wind incantation, you stare at the sails, waiting for the dweomer to come. But it doesn't.

"Some wizard!"

"You think we'll be able to handle her?"

"Typhoon! Typhoon! Batten the hatches!"

Though they irritate you, the jeers are not as embarrassing as Dalris's look when you have to admit that you were wrong.

Deduct 1 point from your charisma for acting like such an ass. Then turn to 122.

In desperation, willing to take the damage you know will come, you whirl away from the lich and dive into the blue wall of pulsating energy. But there is no damage. In fact, you feel nothing but the hard stone floor on the other side of the mysterious panel of light. Behind you, the lich's laughter bellows into your ears and echoes around you.

Then you hear a low rumbling growl and turn to face the maw of the ravenous tarrasque. You crawl backward, trying to re-enter the Wall of Force, only to receive a powerful, stunning shock. As with your own Wall of Force spell, it works on only one side—the side where the hungry tarrasque waits. . . .✘

"Dalris is right," you tell Garn. "We don't know what to expect during the next few hours, and you may need to save your healing powers for more desperate circumstances. I know how to control the pain with my will, at least for a while. I'm used to it."

The paladin raises a single hand. "As you wish, my friend. I only wanted to remove any source of distraction that might interfere with your ability to concentrate."

The chivalrous man pauses, looking over your shoulder at the horizon. "But now, I must prepare my knights for the landing. Unless my eyes are failing me, I can already see the coastline."

You turn as the cavalier leaves you and Dalris at the rail. In the distance you can barely see a thin line several shades lighter than the sea and the starless night sky.

"That's it, all right," mutters Dalris. "I've seen it often enough on dark nights like this."



The woman's bright eyes seem to flash from the deep tan of her cheeks. For a moment of fantasy, you wish that you were a swordsman, perhaps one of the powerfully built Kandian barbarians she leads in her furtive war against the tyrant Arno and his renegade paladins. Dalris turns to face you, interrupting the fantasy. Feeling unreasonably that she must be able to see your thoughts, you hurriedly avert your gaze.

"You know, Carr, I was surprised when you told Garn not to heal your pain. Magic may have wrecked your body and part of your mind, but I can still see some of the person I used to know—and I still like him." Before your confused mind will let you reply, she hurries on, "Now don't wait until it's too late to fix that leg."

The bard smiles and touches you gently on the arm before she strides away in the darkness, to prepare her force of barbarians for the assault on their homeland.

Add 1 point to your charisma skill score and turn to 159.

128

"If Arno has strengthened his guards along the coast because of Dalris's raids, they'll be keeping their eyes open for small craft of the type she's been using. We can take them by surprise if we beach the ships," you reply.

Garn nods quickly. "My knights will overrun them in less than an hour with the help of Blessed Dyan."

"Maybe even without it," you murmur. "Flash our decision to Thayne. I'll talk to the captain."

The master of the vessel frowns when you tell him your plan. "This is low tide," he says. "There's a shallow sandbar just offshore, between us and the beach. I don't think the wind is strong enough to get us over the shallows and onto the beach. We need at least ten more knots of wind to sail with full sails."

When you relay the captain's concerns to Dalris and Garn, the bard, in frustration, slaps her fist into her palm. "Perhaps I can pray to my father's wind spirits to aid us," she murmurs. "I'm no druid priestess, but our primary mission is to liberate the holy grove of Wealwood from Arno's evil control. That might convince the spirits to lis-

ten to my prayers even though I haven't attempted bardic magic for nearly seven years."

You wonder if the bard's suggestion would work. Your Gust of Wind spell might also provide enough wind to drive the galleys onto the bar, but you're afraid that its dweomer might interfere with Dalris's druid magic—if it's even working after all these years!

If you want to let Dalris try her druid prayer, turn to 122. If you'd rather use your Gust of Wind spell, turn to 134. If you'd prefer not to use magic, turn to 149.

129

"I couldn't find hollyphant hair," Rufyl replies, *"but I had some extra time, so I brought that planetar fluff instead."*

You focus the power of your Detect Magic spell upon the tiny opaline feather. To your enchanted senses, a pale violet aura surrounds the holy creature's down.

"Excellent! This will do nicely!" you exclaim.

Continue reading in 98.

130

You're getting nervous about the noises from the rear of the temple mound and the unnatural quiet of the woods in front of you. You wish that you had taken the time to activate your Detect Evil or Detect Invisibility spells.

You begin to fidget, shifting your weight from side to side. You hear a slight shuffling sound that you recognize as a little unusual for your feet to be making. But before you can check it out, you feel a dagger stab deep into your kidney, draining your life away. ✕

131

"I'd rather stick with our original plans and sail right in," you tell your three companions, "but I don't know if there's enough wind to put us ashore with the speed we need. Let's go back to the galley and ask the captain what he thinks. He's the mariner among us."

Thayne unties his dinghy and pushes away from yours. "Give us a signal after you talk to him," he says as his oarsmen row for the rangers' ship.



"What happens if there's not enough wind?" Rufyl asks while you return to your own galley.

"That depends on whether we can make Wealwood by daybreak," you reply telepathically.

As soon as you're back on deck, the three of you and Rufyl meet the captain on the quarterdeck. He listens carefully to your options, then lifts his bearded face to test the night wind. After just a few seconds, he nods toward the harbor.

"Aye, we could be on the beach inside of twenty minutes . . ." he says finally, ". . . I don't know if that's fast enough for you."

If you want to ignore the Light spell and assault the harbor, turn to **71**. If the light bothers you, turn to **100**.

132

"Hear me, Lords of the nether planes! I wish for this creature's immediate death!" the half-drow concludes.

The tarrasque's eyes glaze suddenly, and the monstrous thing rolls his great horned head from one side to the other. You expect the weakened and starving beast to collapse, and so does Arno. Your old enemy smiles confidently and takes one fatal step too close to the groggy monster.



The tarrasque whips his huge tail toward the evil wizard, gashing the half-drow's left side through the heavy velvet robe. Arno falls to the stone floor, grievously wounded. His death's-head mace rolls toward the altar stone, and he tries to raise himself on his elbows to crawl away, but the tarrasque snaps quickly, severing the mage's head and left shoulder from his torso amid a shower of blood!



The macabre scene nauseates you, but it leaves you more desperate than ever to find a way to stop the tarrasque. While the monster is wolfing its fresh meal, you dart forward under cover of your Cloak of Elvenkind and search Arno's headless corpse. You ignore the wizard's magical paraphernalia, hoping that some of the more interesting components will give the beast something a little more than indigestion. Now you know first-hand of the horrors that beset the ancient Bhukodian empire!

If you want to cast your own Limited Wish spell, turn to **165**. If you'd rather continue your search for the robe before doing anything about the tarrasque, turn to **20**.

133

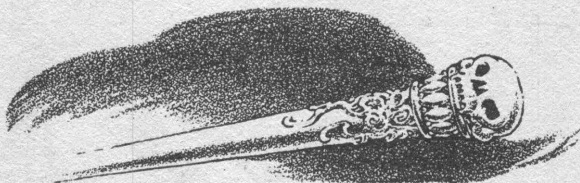
Yellow Marsh doesn't appear to be such a treacherous place in early morning. Occasionally the mists part, revealing places that are among the most beautiful wilderness spots in Tikandia.

Only the fact that Garn keeps warning you that he senses the increasing nearness of evil prevents you from thoroughly enjoying the sights of the marsh.

You're using the Sceptre of Bhukod as a guide. The glow of the magical weapon throbs whenever you point it in one

direction—toward the ruins, you hope—as it seeks the source of its great power. Its use permits you to travel much faster than you might without it, and within several hours it brings you to a region of higher ground.

The Sceptre of Bhukod is throbbing more quickly now, and your pulse quickens, almost matching the sceptre's rhythmic dweomer. Suddenly you spot a large pyramid of earth. Built into one of the sloping sides of the mound is a massive stone archway. . . . And near the archway stands a figure—Arno, the evil wizard whose quest for power is destroying your land! Turn to 172.



134

“It’s been a long time since you practiced druid magic,” you say in Dalris’s ear. “Let me try my Gust of Wind spell. It’s fresher in my mind than the prayer would be in yours.”

The bard’s expression of concentration fades into a frown with deep furrows lining her forehead. Her face reddens when she finally realizes what you’re suggesting.

“You can’t let anyone else use magic in your presence! That’s the trouble, isn’t it? You’re jealous of anyone with powers like your own!”

You scowl quickly at the bard’s furious but beautiful face. “I’m not going to argue with you, Dalris. Our immediate objective is to get our forces ashore as quickly as we can. I’m more confident about my magic than you are about your druid prayers—it’s that simple.”

You turn away from your irate companion and banish your annoyance from your mind so that you can focus your thoughts on the powerful Gust of Wind spell.

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 27 or more, turn to 18; if it is less than 27, turn to 125.

Your hurried Dispel Magic attempt has no effect upon Arno's magical barrier. The dark wizard sneers at you and steps closer, brandishing his enchanted mace.

"Have you grown so weak that you can no longer cast a simple Dispel dweomer?" he mocks. "If that's the case, perhaps you won't even be able to survive an elementary thrashing."

You try to ward off his blows with your staff, but the half-drow is much stronger than you are. You feel only the first of the countless blows he rains upon your skull before it is crushed and you know nothing more. ✕



"The real threat comes from Pazuzu and his allies," you tell Jarmel. "We have to attack this disease at its core, just as your master is trying to do. Take me to Shanif so that we can help him fight these 'githyanki' and Pazuzu!"

"But Lord Shanif instructed me to . . ."

"Shanif is in no position to 'instruct' anyone about anything!" you blurt. "Do as I say!"

The opinicus blinks his simian eyes several times and extends one forepaw. Just as before, you grasp the furry hand and feel the same disorientation in time and space. This time, however, you're conscious of a sudden leap into a great void, a blackness so intense that it seems infinite. If it were not for the comforting touch of Jarmel's paw, you would be experiencing nothingness.

The journey ends abruptly as the void is suddenly filled

with distant, floating images that are constantly coalescing and merging into other images, much like the tiny collisions of dust particles in a ray of sunlight. The opinicus appears to be drawn toward one of the mutating images in particular. The closer you get to it, the more distinct its components become. The darkness around you lightens abruptly as you sail into the image, becoming part of it yourselves.

The opinicus lands on a bleak plain, unbroken by any terrain features. The "ground" beneath your feet is neither solid nor liquid, but a dense gas that is firm enough to walk on. You reflexively worry about falling through the wispy substance and wish it were solid. As if the ground had heard your thoughts, it transforms itself immediately into comfortable sod!

"What's this? Other visitors to the land of Gith?"

The voice echoes in your head, the most dominating telepathic message you've ever received. You look around you, but see nothing except a flat plain of grassy sod in all directions, with you and Jarmel in the center.

"Here, you must structure your own world," says the opinicus, who senses your confusion. *"Conflicts on the astral plane are often resolved by the strength of one's imagination. If your images are stronger than those around you, they will replace the weaker ones. It is nearly impossible to survive on the astral plane without strong telepathic skills."*

"An excellent summary, opinicus!" calls the mental voice in your head. *"Since your human friend appears to lack those skills, we shall provide a reality for him to enjoy before he dies."*

A giant form materializes directly in front of you, a horrible form you've seen only once before— at the Saven cathedral many years ago. Pazuzu's hawkish eyes and beak glare at you from ten feet above your head. His humanoid body ends at the scaled avian legs and taloned feet.

"Where is Lord Shanif?" demands the opinicus.

"Did you hear the beast?" Pazuzu calls to some unseen entity. *"He wants his master!"*

Suddenly the air around you is filled with laughter and



jeers in a language you don't recognize. Humanoid forms begin to take shape around Pazuzu's monstrous legs, shapes that become more hideous each instant. They're skeletoid warriors, eight of them, with pointed ears and plumes of golden brown hair, bedecked with jeweled armor and glimmering weapons.

"*Githyanki!*" exclaims Jarmel.

"*Indeed!*" says Pazuzu. "*But you were asking for your master. Show him the marid!*"

The astral warriors disperse, letting you glimpse Shanif's giant body, riddled with arrows and lacerated with gashes. Your mind is overwhelmed by a sudden telepathic screech as the opinicus sees its dead master.

A sparkling cone of light streams from the beast's eyes, showering the demon prince with its rays. Pazuzu shields his hawkish face and leaps backward.

"*Kill him!*" he commands the githyanki. The warriors lunge at the opinicus, slashing and stabbing the telepath with deadly abandon. Jarmel's screams in your own brain are deafening and you're so overwhelmed by his agony that you fall to your knees on the grassy ground, clutching your head and screaming as well! The telepathic pain is so great that you're glad when the opinicus finally succumbs to its injuries.

You collapse on the ground, which is no longer grass and wait your turn. ✕

137

Garn gazes at the distant glow of Saven's harbor lights on the horizon. "We'll be able to see the port itself within an hour," he muses, "and from the looks of those lights, Arno may be expecting us. It's almost midnight, yet every light in Saven seems to be lit!"

You nod gravely. "I've been watching the sky, too. Either the city of Saven is burning or everyone in the harbor is completely awake. I was hoping they'd all be asleep."

"What are you two planning?"

Dalris has slipped onto the quarterdeck so soundlessly that neither of you noticed her arrival. She's standing beside the pilot, her hand on the hilt of her shortsword.

"It seems we may have a welcoming committee," you reply with a gesture toward the lighted horizon.

"They may be expecting a frontal assault," says Garn thoughtfully, "so perhaps we should change our plans. It might be better to send Thayne's rangers in first by small boats. If they can get ashore and create some disturbance, we could use it as cover to land from the galley."

"A change at this point might be confusing," says Dalris. "My men are itching for combat. Let's stick to our original plan and beach both vessels. We've got enough wind to drive us onto the sand at least twenty feet."

Both of them look at you, knowing that your opinion will determine the action. The lights of Saven are brighter on the horizon and you must decide soon whether to send the rangers in first (164) or to attempt a massive assault with both ships (182).

138

With both Thayne and Garn rowing, it takes less than thirty minutes to reach the first breakers on the Wealwood coast. The cowardly Rufyl is shivering beneath your feet in the prow while Dalris is handling the tiller. For as far as you can see to the east, there are scattered fires along the beach.

"Steer to the west," you tell the bard. "It looks as if the line of campfires just stops over that way. If we can find a landing spot beyond the guard posts, maybe we can come up behind them and take the guards by surprise."

The bard doesn't reply immediately. She stands in a crouch and peers into the darkness on your left. You follow her gaze and finally see a dark mass even blacker than the starless night.

"What is it?" you hiss.

"That's the reason you don't see any fires belonging to Arno's superstitious orcs to the west," she replies. "That's Citadel Rock, the boundary marker on the southwestern corner of Wealwood. Everything to the west, from here to the outskirts of Saven, is Yellow Marsh!"

The bard's mention of the swampy wilderness where you must find the lost temple of Bhukod sends a tingle up your

spine. You scan the fringe of the marsh with your Infravision spell but only see the fleeting auras of furtive wild creatures lurking in the shadows.

"If we could land on the marsh side of Citadel Rock, we might be able to work our way around it and surprise the guards on the east side," Thayne suggests.

"It'd be just as easy to surprise them by landing on the east side in the first place," says Dalris.

Turn to 13 if you want to land in Yellow Marsh, or to 52 if you'd rather go to the east of the rock.

139

"Hollyphant hairs are very precious, Master," thinks Rufyl into your mind. *"I haven't seen one in more than fifty years. If I had started looking sooner, I might have been able to locate a suitable substitute, but you didn't give me much time before noon."*

You frown, both at yourself and Rufyl's grumblings, and remove the Dismissal spell from Landor's traveling spellbook. It would be useless without an appropriate component.

Cross the Dismissal spell from your List of Spells. You will not be able to use it in this adventure. Then turn to 98.

140

I came here knowing that I might have to confront the tarasque, you tell yourself once your immediate terror has passed, and now it seems that the time has come to do just that!

You pick your way through the litter to the shattered doors, where you listen for a moment to get your bearings in the underground complex of tunnels and passages. The deep rumble sounds again way off to your right, where a tunnel merges with the passageway from the hall. You hold the Sceptre of Bhukod in front of you like a beacon and start to run in that direction.

"BACK! GET BACK!"

The urgent voice echoes in the corridor, but you think you recognize it by its thick and unusual accent—it's Arno! You didn't beat him here after all!



Moving even more cautiously, you round a turn in the corridor and see a faint blue glow coming from a wide opening to the left. When you approach it, you hear the sound of running feet, followed by another growl from, you assume, the tarrasque. Then the ground trembles beneath your feet as something heavy shifts positions beyond the doorway into the blue-lit chamber.

Turn to 168.

141

The streets of Saven have become even filthier than the back alleys of Freeton where thieves and mongrelmen once thrived. Human and animal excrement, raw garbage and rotting corpses are strewn in every gutter. The stench is so terrible that you wonder how anyone can stand to remain in the city.

"Not many humans are in this city, Master," says Rufyl in reply to your unspoken question. *"You and your friends are the only human minds I have sensed since we left the beach."*

"There is evil all around us!" mutters Garn, with Soul-tooth's blue glow reflecting in his eyes.

"And you don't have to be a paladin to smell it," adds Thayne. He's walking beside Dalris in the center of the cobblestone street, a gas dart in each hand. The square tower of the Saven cathedral looms on the next block, making you wonder if Dalris and Garn remember the last time you were there, when Arno and the demon Pazuzu confronted you with the power of Lolth's dark crown.

"They are thinking of just that, Master" reports Rufyl, *"and the images are frightening."*

You're only thirty yards from the deserted entrance of the

cathedral when a rain of crossbow shafts descends upon you from above.

If your Protection from Normal Missiles is active, turn to 184. If you did not choose to activate that spell, turn to 154.

142

The strain of casting the Limited Wish spell is making it impossible to stand. Your legs give way beneath you, and you collapse on the ancient floor.

Arno is only a little stronger, but it's enough for him to cling to the stone altar and pull a long jeweled dagger from his velvet robe. You lack the strength to stand, much less to fight the half-drow. With a desperate effort, you manage to pull the cowl of your Cloak of Elvenkind over your face and whisper the command word that will make you invisible within the enchanted garment.

The dark wizard's face proves the effectiveness of your action. He moves his head from side to side, looking frantically about the altar for you. You sense what he's going to do next and manage to roll away from the spot, wedging yourself beneath the diamond-hard scales of the fallen tarrasque's tail.

Arno dives to the floor where you were only moments before and starts crawling over its surface, feeling for you. As you hoped, he makes a wide detour around the corpse of the tarrasque—and around you. After several minutes of searching, your rival gives up looking for you. He removes another parchment scroll from his robe and steps up to the raised dias behind the altar, where the shimmering energy panel continues to bathe the ritual chamber with its pale blue light.

As he starts to read the incantation, you suddenly realize that it's a Disintegration spell, one of the few spells that can cancel a Wall of Force dweomer. When Arno utters the final word of the incantation, the spacious altar chamber is plunged immediately into a dense blackness. The only light where the shimmering blue panel once was is a pair of gleaming reddish spots. Then, just as suddenly, the panel of blue light is back, but Arno has vanished, presumably behind the new Wall of Force dweomer.

If you want to use Teleport without Error to follow Arno behind the Wall of Force, cross it off your List of Spells and turn to 169. If you have another idea, turn to 20.

143

You don't want to leave the main entrance to the Temple of Power unguarded, but you also find yourself questioning the reason for Shanif's rather imperious manner when he ordered you not to touch the archway or the granite slab blocking it.

If you wish to ignore the marid's command, as well as your father's magical warning, and try to get past the Wizard Lock, turn to 23. If you still believe you should heed the words of the marid, turn to 27.

144

You can't ignore the message Jarmel relayed from your father—that you must cooperate with Arno to defeat the tarrasque. *But how do we cooperate? How can we?* you ask yourself as you see Arno unfurl a delicate parchment scroll and begin to read it by the light of his enchanted skull-mace.

It's a Limited Wish incantation, similar to the one you brought in your traveling spellbook. Under normal conditions, it would be almost as powerful as a Wish spell, but you're not sure how effective it would be against a tarrasque.

From the safety of the doorway, and hidden by your Cloak of Elvenkind, you watch the unfolding confrontation between Arno and the tarrasque with mixed emotions. It would be ideal if Arno could slay the hideous monster and spend his most powerful spells doing in the process, just as he's doing now. That way, you could easily defeat him, and the double threat to Tikandia would be ended.

Suddenly, it dawns on you that the best way to cooperate with Arno against the tarrasque would be to pool your Limited Wish spells into one extremely powerful Wish for the monster's death.

Turn to 32.

The others are waiting in the dinghy by the time you finish making your preparations and waking Rufyl. The old pseudodragon is even more irritable when he sees that he must travel by dinghy to the mainland.

"I am too old for this, Master! Besides, I detest water and I cannot swim!"



You send the protesting familiar a mild mental reprimand, reminding him of his duty. Then you tie a rope around his scaly girth and lower him to the dinghy yourself. When you join the others in the small boat, Dalris points at a shadowy mass to your right.

"That's Citadel Rock," she says. "It forms the southwestern corner of my father's province and divides Wealwood from Yellow Marsh to the west. We should be able to get through. Arno's guards are mostly superstitious half-orcs who would never venture into the swamps after dark."

No one replies as the bard works the tiller and Thayne rows toward the wild shoreline to the left of the towering Citadel Rock. The knowledgeable barbarian guides you into a tiny cove nestled among moss-draped cypresses and shadowy forms.

"From what I've heard, it may not be superstition that keeps them away from Yellow Marsh at night," murmurs Thayne. The elf is pulling the dinghy onto the soggy shore. While you wait for him to stash it, Garn and Dalris study the muddy ground for trails which might lead deeper into the marsh.

"What you've heard may have truth in it!" says Garn, who has been using his clerical skills to detect evil. "I sense malevolence but can't see anything."

Suddenly a loud splash to the left of the paladin startles

everyone. Your infravision reveals a large winged creature materializing from nothing just a few feet from your friends!

If your own Detect Evil spell is active, turn to 73. If it isn't, go to 45.

146

With the precise movement developed by long practice, you leap from the edge of Citadel Rock while waving a tiny white feather and chanting the spell's phrase. Almost instantly, you can feel the dweomer lift you soaringly into the night air.

You circle once, then dive for the space remaining between the guards and your companions. You light on the sand behind the bushes at the base of Citadel Rock already prepared to cast your Stinking Cloud spell.

Cross Stinking Cloud from your List of Spells. Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 29 or more, turn to 33. If it is less than 29, turn to 115.

147

"What are we waiting for? It's nearly midnight!"

Thayne's gruff svirfneblin voice is an unlikely vehicle for his faint Elvish accents. The ranger has just boarded the galley and is grinning beneath his thick mica sunshades. He's clad in his deep-gnomish armor of mithral-steel rings, just as before, but has added a small knapsack to his gear.

"We were waiting on you," answers Dalris, just coming from the captain's quarters. "I've given the captain his bearings. We're bound for Yellow Marsh."

The voyage across Pirates' Alley to the wildest, least inhabited region of the Tikandian coast takes only a few hours. During the short crossing, you doze below decks with Rufyl, both of you exhausted from last night's preparations. You seem to have just lain down when Dalris wakens you from a sound sleep.

"We're lying off the coast," she says. "Get your things together and wake Rufyl. We'll be waiting for you at the skiff."

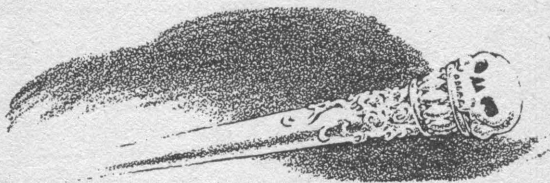
The bard's slim leather-clad figure has barely gone when

you shake the sleep from your brain. Knowing of the dark, miasmic place you are about to go, you focus your mental energy upon your permanent Infravision spell. Deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score.

You may also want to activate one or more of your other permanent spells at this time:

<i>Comprehend Languages</i>	<i>Protection from Evil</i>
<i>Detect Evil</i>	<i>Protection from Normal</i>
	<i>Missiles</i>
<i>Detect Invisibility</i>	<i>Read Magic</i>
<i>Detect Magic</i>	<i>Tongues</i>

Mark each spell you select as "Active" on your List of Spells on your Character Stats Card. Remember to deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score for each activated spell. Then turn to **145**.



148

The Limited Wish spell is one of your most powerful—and dangerous—incantations. You have to be very careful about the way you phrase a wish, as everyone knows. Yours is a simple wish as you read from Landor's parchment and substitute your own words:

"Hear my desire, forces of the nether planes! I wish to find the Robe of the Archmagi."

At the instant you complete the incantation, the parchment bursts into smokeless, heatless flame and turns into a fine white ash in your hands. Your vision begins to blur. It seems as if you're standing perfectly still in a spinning bottle, the curved sides of which are the columns and walls of the ancient chamber. The images soon become so blurred that you see nothing more until the dweomer transports you to a very small room.

Turn to **99**.



149

"Weak magic is sometimes worse than no magic at all," you tell the captain. "My Gust of Wind isn't strong enough to move the galleys, and Dalris hasn't used her druid skills in years. I suggest we just try as many sails as possible."

"Set your heading for the coast!" he orders the man at the wheel. "Chief! Give us full sails! I want all the canvas we've got on the yards!" His bellow rouses the crew from their hammocks. Sailors pour from the hatches and quickly fill the shrouds like four-legged spiders scampering up giant black webs. The sails drop into place and are hauled taut by deck crews.

"The wind!" shouts the first mate with a gesture toward the loose sails. "We'll make ten knots, but that's about it. There's not enough to drive us over the sandbar!"

"Wind! Aye, lad, wind! Can't you feel it? This is the kind that comes from the gods—cool, steady, and strong enough to send us over that sandbar like a dream," announces the Captain, his arms raised to soak in the waves of cool air.

You turn to see Dalris, her arms also raised, not to feel the wind, but to finish a prayer. She prayed to her father's wind spirits after all, and they responded.

The bard raises her head hesitantly and feels for herself

the splendid wind she has summoned. "I couldn't let you jeopardize this invasion by just waiting till we were caught on a sandbar, Carr. I'm sorry."

"I'm sorry, Dalris, too. I'm sorry I didn't tell you to go ahead and pray in the first place. Thank you."

You'd like to say more to the bard, but the ship is rushing toward the Tikandian beach, and you have only a few minutes before the fighting begins to equip yourself with *Infra-vision* and any other permanent spells you may need:

<i>Comprehend Languages</i>	<i>Protection from Evil</i>
<i>Detect Evil</i>	<i>Protection from Normal</i>
	<i>Missiles</i>
<i>Detect Invisibility</i>	<i>Read Magic</i>
<i>Detect Magic</i>	<i>Tongues</i>

Mark each spell you select as "Active" on your List of Spells. Remember to deduct 1 point from your intelligence skill score for each newly activated spell, including *Infra-vision*; then turn to **156**.

150

You walk alone out onto the longest pier until you're standing directly under the intense dweomer of your rival's *Continual Light* spell. Despite the dangers in the water below, you feel a thrill of combat, even though Arno is nowhere in sight. You channel the excitement into mental energy and focus it directly upon the huge disk of light hovering above you.

"*Vyehdo!*" you shout, when the dweomer of your *Dispel Magic* spell reaches its zenith.

Cross *Dispel Magic* off your List of Spells. Then roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 32 or more, turn to **162**; if it is less than 32, turn to **171**.

151

The half-drow wizard scowls but nods.

"Good," you say. "Begin on my signal."

You study the tarrasque's movements until you can predict its next position around the table so that your concentration won't be broken by any sudden lunge. When you're

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ready, you signal Arno with one finger, then two, then three, and begin to read from Landor's scrawl while your unlikely colleague mutters the formula on his own parchment.

"Hear my desire, forces of the nether planes! I wish for the death of this tarrasque!"

At the instant you complete your incantations, both parchments burst into flames. The tarrasque's eyes bulge with animalistic terror, and you can only imagine what inner forces it senses or feels as the combined dweomers destroy it. The ancient monster, weakened by centuries of starvation, is more vulnerable to your and Arno's magic than it was to an entire nation of sorcerer-kings! With a great hissing and thrashing of its spined tail, the tarrasque crashes to the stone floor of the altar room. As the terrible beast dies, you feel an overwhelming weakness seep into every muscle and nerve of your body, sapping you of what little energy you have left.

Roll 2 dice and deduct the result from your current hit points. If the new total is less than 4, turn to 142. If it is four or more, continue at 54.

152

The next conscious sensation you have is one of being carried from the temple. Words form in your mind rather than through your ears, and for a moment you think that Rufyl has found you.

Hear me! You must rouse yourself! The situation is very grave! We must act quickly!

"I hear you, Rufyl," you murmur, trying to open your eyes. When they finally crack enough for you to see slightly, you see that it was Jarmel, the marid's opinicus familiar who carried you from the temple. You try to move, but your legs won't function at all!

Don't try to move yet. I'm preparing a healing spell which should repair some of the damage done to your brain.

The opinicus's mental command has a persuasiveness about it that you suspect may be an enchantment, but you're in too much pain to fight it.

Your mind suddenly fills with some of the strangest sen-

sations you've ever had. It's as if you could see the individual cells of your brain and know immediately which ones are injured beyond repair and which are just in need of mending. As soon as the dweomer of Jarmel's healing spell identifies its targets, the damaged cells start to mend themselves, as if commanded to do so by some internal process.

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your remaining hit points as long as the new total isn't more than your original number. Then turn to 49.

153

The symbols inscribed above the archway are in the same obscure Elvish language you observed through the crystal in your study. Since you haven't had time to study that ancient writing, you focus the dweomer of your Comprehend Languages spell on the carved symbols. Because the spell is a permanent one, you need neither components nor spellwords as you did when Thayne taught it to you more than ten years ago.

The stone glyphs appear to rearrange themselves in your mind as the useful spell's dweomer translates them into Common characters:

“ENTER THIS TEMPLE
WEAK AND HUMBLE CONJURERS

*

EXIT THIS TEMPLE
YE ADEPTS OF THE GREATEST POWERS”

You can imagine the impression such an inscription might have had upon a fledgling magic-user in ancient Bhukod, having come from the far-flung provinces to study the arcane arts at what was the greatest center of magic in the world.

You smile sadly at the irony of the stone slab sealing the most powerful mages in history inside their “Temple of Power” with a ravenous tarrasque.

If you wish to attempt to open the archway, turn to 23. If you think you should guard the archway as you were told, turn to 27.

Just as another volley of quarrels clatters around you, you spot a shadowy figure on the roof just above you. He's not aiming at you because he can't see you in your Cloak of Elvenkind, but Thayne is standing in the middle of the street.

You lunge just as the shaft whistles toward the old elf, trying to push him out of the way. When the short metal bolt smacks into the base of your skull, you have only a split-second to regret that you never activated your Protection from Normal Missiles spell. ✖

From the safety of the doorway, you watch the grim dance of death around the ancient altar. *Maybe I should just let the tarrasque eat him*, you think coldly. *We'd be rid of one problem, anyway. I'd still have to figure out a way to stop the tarrasque, but at least I wouldn't have to worry about Arno any more.*

Your dark rival has unrolled a parchment and has started to read the ancient Elvish words. You recognize it instantly as a lengthy Limited Wish incantation. You've been wondering if your own Limited Wish spell would be sufficient to stop the tarrasque, especially since it's the most powerful formula in your traveling spellbook.

Suddenly you realize that two Limited Wishes for the tarrasque's death would certainly kill it. *But what would ensure that Arno and I would actually cooperate with each other?* you ask yourself. If you want to let the tarrasque and Arno fight each other while you watch, turn to 46. If you want to risk joining Arno so the two of you can confront the tarrasque together, turn to 32.

The supernatural wind drives the two galleys more than twenty yards up onto the sandy beach. The vessels' decks are teeming with men and horses, leaping, climbing, jumping—getting off the ships any way they can. You and Rufyl remain behind with the marines and other nonwarriors, watching the easy landing.

"I think Arno's guards were so overwhelmed by surprise and our numbers that they fled into the hills," you suggest after Garn and Thayne bring you news that the invasion is established. "Where's Dalris?"

"With her Kandians, offering a druid sacrifice in thanksgiving," says Garn. You sense a slight note of arrogance in the cavalier's reaction to what he considers to be a "primitive" religion.



"It was her druid gods' wind that got us here," you remind the paladin.

"We were all praying," he replies, just as Dalris joins you near the shoreline.

"Tikandia!" she says gleefully, raising her leather-clad arms to the night sky. "We've done it!"

"Not yet," you tell her. "We haven't even begun to move into the highlands, where Arno's Knights of Truth are based. And we haven't trekked into the marsh to stop Arno before he releases the tarrasque. No, Dalris, I think the fun is just beginning!"

"Well, what are we waiting for? I hear that Yellow Marsh is fascinating by daylight!" she urges with the fire of excitement in her dark eyes.

Turn to 133.

157

You're delighted to see the frowns and suspicious looks fade on all three faces in front of you as your story ends. Only Garn has a serious problem with any of your suggestions.

"It's obvious to me that we must stop Arno immediately," says the paladin. "Still, I shall never agree to let brave sol-

diers go to their deaths purely as a diversionary tactic. That is absolutely unacceptable to a cavalier dedicated to the service of the Blessed Dian!"

"I agree!" says Dalris.

You glance at Thayne, who merely nods. You recognize your friends' limits and shrug in acceptance. "Then we won't consider such a plan at all," you announce. "We shall confine our invasion choices to open assaults on Saven or Wealwood, or to a clandestine infiltration by way of Yellow Marsh. I shall study all three options and let you know my decision tomorrow. Now go home and get some rest, all of you. The next twenty-four hours may determine the future of Tikandia!"

As soon as your companions' footsteps die on the stairs, you command your Unseen Servant to bolt the door while you reach for one of your father's scrolls.

If you've already sent Rufyl for spell components, turn to 116. If not, turn to 9.

158

As you say the last words of your Web spell, you dodge inside the temple entrance. A network of enchanted webs instantly drapes the gaping archway behind you. Arno lunges for you with his skull-tipped mace but stumbles into the entangling fibers. The dark mage twists reflexively, getting himself even more snared by the sticky strands. He gradually stops struggling, but you see that he's securely caught.

"So long, Arno," you say. And the evil magic-user curses you fluently as you leave to search for the Robe of the Archmagi.

As soon as you take the first few steps into the inner darkness of the underground temple, you feel a sudden throbbing against your back. It's coming from the Sceptre of Bhukod in its soft hide casing. When you open the flap, the bulbous triple head of the sceptre shines with the brightness of a Light spell in the dim antechamber.

Following the magic weapon's changing aura past the gruesome rubble of the tarrasque's rampages through the centuries, you take a long corridor that leads deeper under-

ground. You make several turns and see many rooms with shattered doors where the hungry beast foraged for food. You keep to the widest passage until it opens into a huge chamber with numerous wide marble columns supporting the stone slab roof.

Turn to 89.



159

Sunrise is only a few hours away when you sight the strip of white sand sandwiched between the black sea and sky. Both Dalris and Garn have gone below to prepare their forces for the landing, and Rufyl is curled into a sleeping ball of scales at your feet.

Thoughts of your impending confrontation with Arno are disturbed by the sudden approach of a sailor from the shadows of the midships deck.

"What is it?" you demand, resenting the intrusion on the little remaining time you have to be private.

"A signal from the elves' galley, Magus Delling. They want to know whether we're going to send scouts to the coast before we land in full force. What shall I tell them?"

You glance toward the quarterdeck, wondering if you should call Garn and Daris for a conference (3). If you want to just go ahead and make your own decision, turn to 34.

160

Arno is totally unprepared for your Web spell, perhaps because he expected you to attack him rather than to spend time casting a spell at an archway. You move your hands rapidly, smearing them with tiny bits of cobwebs you carry just for that purpose. Then, before Arno can recover from his surprise, you whisper the single spellword and focus its dweomer upon the gaping entrance to the Temple of Power.

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 27 or more, turn to 158. If it is less than 27, turn to 208.

161

You've never used your father's Teleport without Error incantation, but it's supposed to be a safer spell than the more common Teleport, which you know from a bad experiment to be unsafe.

You hastily tear the formula from the spellbook and begin to read the brief incantation:

"I call upon thee, powers of every plane, to suspend thy laws of being. Erase my existence at this dimensional point in time and recreate it..."

In horror, you realize suddenly that you must supply your exact destination. *I should have planned the spell in advance*, you think woefully. *I knew better than to attempt an unfamiliar formula, especially one so...*

Your thoughts taper into nothing, as does your existence in the material world.✘

162

You gasp as you feel an intense drain of energy from your body. The disc of brilliant light above you seems to surge, becoming so bright that it burns your eyes. You somehow remain standing and continue to focus the magnetic dweomer of your Dispel Magic spell upon the center of the disc.

With one final flare, the lozenge of light dims suddenly and vanishes. At the same instant, you collapse to the pier, your eyes charred and your body just a weak shell.

Roll 2 dice and deduct the result from your current hit points. If your spell has drained your energy to 0 hit points or below, your heroic action has cost you your life. If you still have some hit points, continue reading in 105.

163

You draw the hood of the enchanted cloak closer around your face and follow the curve of the temple mound toward the sound of voices. You move swiftly but smoothly, taking

care not to step on twigs and branches that might break and negate the invisibility given you by the cloak. You're almost close enough to hear distinctly what the strangers are saying when a familiar voice sounds telepathically in your brain.

"Master! You're here!"

There's a sudden crashing through the undergrowth as your pseudodragon familiar tracks you both by scent and by thought, followed closely by your friends from Seagate. Dalris is the first to appear, just as the pseudodragon squats in front of your invisible body like a trained pointing dog flushing a pheasant.



"Carr? Are you here?" she calls worriedly.

"Where's that deserter?" adds Thayne. His chunky little figure clad in black mithral-ring armor appears at Dalris's side only seconds after she joins Rufyl. His voice is not worried but angry.

"Here I am," you reply, whipping the cowl away from your face.

"Why did you leave us?" Dalris demands bitterly. All traces of concern have vanished from her voice. You knew she'd be angry at you for leaving with the opinicus, but you're surprised at the hurt expression you see consumed by the anger on her beautiful barbarian face.

"Yes, Delling!" exclaims Garn. "Why did you leave us when we needed you most?" You've never heard the paladin use such a cool tone of voice with anyone before, and he only calls you by your last name when he's really perturbed with you.

Deduct 2 points from your charisma skill score. If you left your friends just before the invasion of the Wealwood coast, turn to 173. If you left them at another time, turn to 200.

"Signal Thayne to use the dinghies," you advise Garn and Dalris when they've joined you. "Elves can see better in the dark than humans, and their hearing is sharper. If Arno has concentrated his forces on the harbor, the rangers will have a better chance of sneaking into Saven by landing away from the harbor itself."

Garn is silent for a while, then nods. "We can drop our sails and lie off the horizon until the rangers attack. Then we can quickly catch the wind and beach this vessel within minutes, just as Dalris suggested. It would be wise to keep the other ship in the water, though, just in case we need an escape route."

"I'll give Thayne the message while you prepare your warriors," you tell them.

Turn to 53.

One Limited Wish couldn't stop that thing, but two might! you think.

You slip quietly to the side of the altar opposite the feasting tarrasque. Then you toss the cowl away from your face and open your traveling spellbook to the Limited Wish incantation and begin to read it in a loud voice.



The tarrasque pauses between bites with scraps of bloody brown velvet draping its chin. The beast leans forward ominously, so close that you smell its gory breath. You control your fear, positive that you can dominate the monster with coolness and confidence.

You discover all too soon that you're wrong! ✖

166

The last time you used your Teleport spell was when you did irreparable damage to your hip. What started as a simple experiment turned into a disaster. You sent yourself only fifty yards across the College Arcane grounds and materialized in a large tree with your right leg embedded in the trunk! You dangled painfully by the twisted leg for thirty minutes before help arrived to cut you free.

Reluctant to risk the powerful and unpredictable dweomer again, you close your eyes and concentrate on your fear, forcing your mind to conquer it. Finally you feel the anxiety lift, and you turn your thoughts to the memorized Teleport incantation.

"Rulers of the material world and its dimensions! I abjure you to transport my physical being into the location conjured in my thoughts!"

As soon as you utter the last syllable, you focus on the memory of the last scene you studied in the time crystal. You imagine yourself inside the temple, watching the Bhukodian priests prepare their ultimate weapon against the tarrasque—the Robe of the Archmagi.

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is more than 33, turn to 195. If it is less than 27, turn to 181. If the total is between 27 and 33, turn to 99.

167

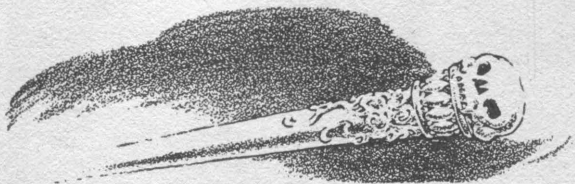
You doubt that any of your offensive spells can break through Arno's enchanted shield, and so you decide to spend your precious Dispel Magic spell to penetrate your rival's magical barricade.

"Vyehdo!" you scream, waving your arms in dismissal.

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 28 or more, turn to 117. If it is less than 28, turn to 135.

168

You inch your way toward the stone sill and slide your face forward until you can get a glimpse of the room beyond it. You see an ancient ritual chamber of some kind, domi-



nated by a massive round altar on a pedestal, making it resemble a flat-topped mushroom. Just beyond the altar, at the rear of the chamber, is a narrow panel of shimmering blue light that illuminates the entire chamber.

Then you see your old rival since the days at College Arcane. Arno is clad in a brown velvet robe and clutches a glowing skull-tipped staff. Facing him from across the altar is the monstrous horned tarrasque, just as you saw it in the crystal! The two opponents eye each warily. Each time one moves, the other counters by shifting in the other direction. If the stakes weren't so high, it would be an interesting game to watch.

If you've just received a message from your father by way of Jarmel, the opinicus, turn to 144. If you haven't, turn to 155.

169

Rather than use the same unpredictable Teleport spell that caused your permanent hip injury, you decide to try your father's Teleport without Error incantation. You breathe deeply for several minutes to relax, then begin to read the ancient High Elvish aloud in the eerie blue light of the altar chamber.

"I call upon thee, powers of every plane, to suspend thy laws of being. Erase my existence at this dimensional point in time and recreate it in an unoccupied space beyond the Wall of Force dweomer."

The faded ink on the parchment vanishes as you read each word. The instant you pronounce the last one, you experience a sensation of floating that lasts only a few seconds. At the moment when you feel a solid floor beneath your feet, you hear Arno's domineering voice.

"Welcome to the chamber of the robe, Magus Delling." He adds in a sneer, "I'm very surprised you had the ability to reach this place."

The half-drow wizard is standing within a luminescent pentagram bearing the insignia of Lolth. In addition to his skull-mace and the Dark Queen's crown, Arno now wears a very old, nondescript robe of gray wool that hangs to the floor as if it were tailored especially for him. The bluish glow of the Wall of Force makes his jet-black skin appear lighter, merging it with the reflected blue of his startling silver hair.

Just outside the pentagram, you see the mummified remains of what you assume was once a Bhukodian dignitary, judging from the jewels and scraps of finery that remain after five centuries.

"Behold the last archmagus of Bhukod! And the new one! The only relics I lack to complete my powerful collection are those stolen by your father from this very room nearly fifty years ago—the Crown of Aerdrie and the Sceptre of Bhukod. I know that you have the sceptre with you now. Give it to me!"

You know that you could never withstand the power of the robe, especially in your weakened condition. Your only hope is that the Sceptre of Bhukod will have the same energy draining effects upon Arno that it had upon Thayne and your uncle Beldon so many years ago. You offer the magical wand to your enemy, bracing yourself for the surge of power that you know from experience you should feel as soon as Arno touches it.

When the dark wizard grasps the three pearls with his black hand, however, just the reverse happens! YOUR life energy flows through the sceptre into HIS body. You collapse on the floor, drained of all muscle control. The Robe of the Archmagi changes its color and texture, instantly darkening to a near-black hue and appearing to be made of the finest soft leather!

The last words you hear before your life energy vanishes are a chilling reminder of your failure. "Hear me, Handmaiden of Lolth! The tarrasque is dead, but the secrets of ancient Bhukod now belong to Lolth through her dedicated servant Arno. I conjure thee to appear in my service as you have in that of your dark mistress, my beloved Queen of all Drow!" ☘

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You wait in the corridor for your companions, unable to remain in the altar chamber amid the gruesome feeding sounds of the tarrasque. While you wait, you examine some of the parchment scrolls you found in Arno's pockets. They're mostly reminder notes on the proper incantations for various purposes. Some magic-users use them all the time, while others, such as yourself, insist on memorizing the spellwords.

You continue browsing through Arno's things until you spot a tiny scroll with several broken wax seals on it, as if it had been read and reclosed a number of times. You break the most recent seal and glance at the scroll. Then you begin to read it very carefully, glancing up from time to time at the bluish aura from inside the door. You have barely finished reading it when the sound of feet running in the stone corridor announces the arrival of your friends and companions.



Rufyl's aged shape is the first to appear in the corridor. "*Your thoughts are so weak. Are you hurt, Master?*" asks the loyal familiar.

"*I'm just very tired,*" you reply.

"Where in the world have you been?" demands Dalris as she comes running in after Rufyl. There's something more than anger in the bard's voice, something positive and warm that surprises you.

"And what's this about Aerdrie's crown?" Thayne demands in a suspicious tone of voice. "I promised Estla I wouldn't let it out of my sight, and no one lies to her!"

"I need two things from you," you tell them. "The first is courage. I need for you to draw the tarrasque away from this chamber long enough for me to get the Robe of the

Archmagi. The second is your trust. I must have the Crown of Aerdrrie in order to control the guardian of the robe. Don't ask me who or what the guardian of the robe is. I only know that there is one."

Dalris and Garn frown at Thayne. It looks as if they've already been planning for this moment—when and if they ever saw you again. You know that their courage is unquestioned, but their trust may be more difficult for you to buy since you left them alone in Yellow Marsh without an explanation.

Roll two dice and add the result to your charisma skill score. If the total is 16 or more, turn to 192. If it is less than 16, turn to 211.

171

You can feel the tremendous energy of the Continual Light spell trying to invade your mind as the Dispel Magic dweomer attracts it to you. It rushes into your mind with such force that you black out for just a moment, not even long enough to fall, but just enough to make you lose your concentration.

"Blast!" you mutter, realizing that you've wasted one of your more useful spells. Then you channel your frustration in a more appropriate direction—Arno! You turn and trot toward the watchtower. Dalris and Rufyl are standing outside the main entrance, but you run past them.

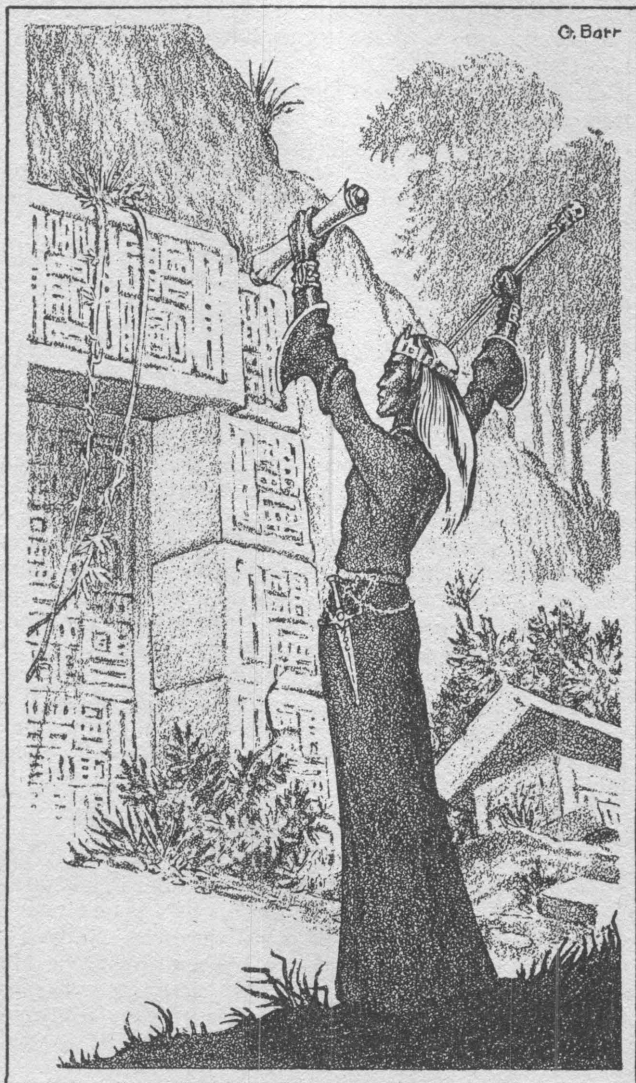
"Carr! Where are you going?" calls the bard.

"To the cathedral! The only way to knock out that spell is to destroy the spellcaster!" you shout over your shoulder. "Come on, Rufyl! Get the others, Dalris. I'll wait at the main avenue."

Turn to 141.

172

Your old enemy is wearing the Crown of Lolth, just as he was the last time you saw him, but his hair is no longer a mass of black tangles. Instead, it's silvery white, falling to the rich, brown velvet shoulders of his conjurer's robe. His jet-black hands are raised toward the inscription at the top of the archway. One of them clutches a heavy ironwood



mace fitted with a death's head carved in ivory at its tip, while the other holds an unrolled parchment scroll.

"It's Arno!" shouts Garn. "He's freeing the tarrasque! Stop him!"

The evil wizard glances quickly in your direction and then returns to his incantation as if he never saw you. *That's the mark of a professional magic-user*, you think, admiring his discipline and control.

Dalris has already dropped to her leather-clad knees and has her small crossbow raised to her shoulder. Your pulse quickens as she fires the quarrel with deadly accuracy at your rival's head, but the iron-tipped missile strikes an invisible barrier a yard before it reaches its target. A shower of sparks is the only reward Dalris gains for her excellent marksmanship. The bard reaches into her bolt-pouch for another quarrel.

"Don't waste your bolts," you tell her. "That's a Protection from Normal Missiles shield. You'll never touch him, but I might!"

You're just preparing a spell of your own when a violent explosion at the archway rocks the ground around you. The Wizard-Locked granite slab guarding the entrance to the Temple of Power has crumbled at Arno's feet, and the sorcerer is darting into the ancient opening.

"After him!" you yell, hobbling as fast as you can with your twisted hip. Dalris is quicker than any of you and is the first to reach the archway. It's almost too late when you spot the bit of phosphorus bursting from the interior blackness.

"DON'T GO IN, DALRIS!" you scream as a Wall of Fire spell creates an infernal curtain at the entrance. The bard whirls around with the agility of a cat, shielding her face with her leather-clad arms. Garn leads her to a safe distance, while you stand with Thayne and Rufyl and stare at the wall of flames.

"He's good, very good," mumbles Thayne. "I guess it's true what they say about his kind."

"What 'kind?' " you ask the old ranger-wizard.

"You mean you don't recognize the combination of that skin and hair color? He's half drow! Your old rival is part

dark elf, and he's got Lolth's crown, which makes him even more powerful. I'd say you've got your hands full with this one, Carr."

"*What Thayne says is true, Master,*" adds Rufyl in a mental note. "I have met his race before, and their thoughts are uniquely malicious."

"Where do we go from here?" asks Thayne.

"After him," you reply calmly. "One way or another, I've got to beat him at his own game. Stay here until the Wall of Fire dweomer fades. If you should find me still in there, you'll have to begin evacuating Tikandia because it will mean I wasn't able to stop the tarrasque."

You must decide quickly whether you will try to teleport yourself to Arno (74) or to the Robe of the Archmagi (41).

173

"I had few doubts about your chances of winning the battle at the beach," you reply to the anger-stiffened paladin. "That kind of action is better handled by good fighters than by crippled magic-users, anyway. I merely thought it would be all right to leave the military aspects of our mission to you. I also feared that Arno would gain entrance to the Bhukodian temple if I delayed coming here until after the invasion."

For a moment or two your friends seem to be debating whether or not to relinquish their anger. Then Thayne shatters the awkward silence by clearing his throat and gesturing to the temple mound.

"So that's it, huh?" he grunts. "Not much to see, just a pile of big rocks!"

"Not on the surface," you agree. "The entrance is on the other side. I don't have any idea how large the temple is underground, inside, but it must be very big, perhaps even reaching to boundary of Wealwood."

"Big enough for a tarrasque's burrow," murmurs the elf-svirfneblin.

"I think you should return to the entrance, Delling," Garn suggests a little stiffly—he hasn't quite forgiven you. "I detect strong evil here, and it's coming from the front of this mound."

You frown at the paladin and begin to move as fast as your injured leg and hip will permit you around the pyramidal mound just in time to see a frighteningly familiar figure moving his hands in a magical gesture and saying some words of ancient magic. Arno!

Turn to 172.

174

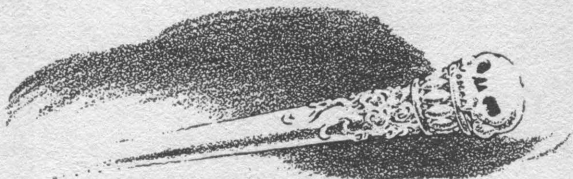
The confrontation between your power and that of the ancient sorcerer-kings who sealed themselves within the temple with the tarrasque is greater than any duel of energies you've ever attempted before. The massive boulder starts to quiver and quake until the ground shakes beneath your feet. Just when you're beginning to feel exhausted and think the Knock spell is going to fail, the boulder shatters from the strain of the two spells and crumbles to the ground.

The dweomer of the ancient Wizard Lock is still glowing on the inner surface of the archway, radiating more magical energy than you've ever seen in one place. You realize with some alarm that your most powerful Knock spell had no effect on the Bhukodian wizards' seal; it merely destroyed a granite boulder!

With the greatest caution, you approach the pile of rubble and try to peer into the darkness through the suffocating dust and fumes issuing from the ancient underground temple. Danger is screaming in every cell of your brain as you focus your infravision through the narrow opening.

"How convenient, Delling. You saved me the trouble—and the waste—of a spell!"

You recognize the curious accent even before you twist around to face Arno, your rival from the day you met him



at College Arcane. The mad, despotic magic-user who calls himself the "Archmagus of Tikandia" is gloating over being able to take advantage of your success in gaining entrance to the lost Temple of Power!

If you want to attack Arno with one of your spells, turn to 107. If you'd rather try to use another spell to prevent him from entering the Temple of Power, turn to 75.

175

The sound of footsteps and voices from the rear of the temple mound makes you wary. Shanif's warning sounded serious enough to make you wonder if Arno or someone else might go to the trouble of trying to lure you away from the temple entrance.

If your Detect Evil spell is active, turn to 79. If it is not, turn to 65.

176

Armed with the Sceptre of Bhukod and the Crown of Aerdrie, you walk past the tarrasque's lifeless hulk and step onto the dias.

"Quit hiding behind your Wall of Force, Arno!" you call. "It's time for us to test the strength of Lolth against that of Aerdrie. Show yourself, drow mongrel!"

The shimmering blue wall suddenly vanishes, but the light of the sceptre remains, revealing a small laboratory chamber lined with shelves and tables. Scrolls, books, and containers of every description are crammed into the tiny room. You realize with a surge of excitement that this is the complete repository of the archmagi's knowledge—the ultimate secrets of the Bhukodian sorcerer-kings!

"Are you suitably overwhelmed, Magus Delling?"

Arno's voice jerks your attention to the side of the chamber, where your rival stands in a luminescent pentagram. At his feet is a mummified priest of some kind, reaching in a final gesture toward the hem of Arno's new garment. It's a simple gray robe that hangs just to the floor, without embellishments of any kind.

"Answer me!"

The wizard's command storms your mind with such force

that you do as he says, gazing into pinpoints of red light which have replaced his stark black eyes. You're unable to resist their power, and feel them loosening your fingers on the shaft of the sceptre.

"Focus your thoughts on my voice, Master! You must not drop the sceptre. You must raise it and put it between you and Arno!"



Rufyl's telepathic boost is just what you need to resist the power of the robe. You brace yourself and thrust the sceptre toward Arno.

The simple gray robe bursts with changing colors dancing over every inch of its magical surface. Arno's eyes are flashing with the same incredible hues when the Sceptre of Bhukod's triple head beams a stream of white light into the wizard's chest. The colors of the robe travel along the beam of light, like the simpler colors of a crystal prism, but the Sceptre of Bhukod's white light stops them halfway between you and Arno.

"If the colors reach you, they will destroy your mind!" Rufyl warns. *"You must focus the strength of the sceptre against them."*

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is less than 34, deduct 1 from your current hit points and repeat the roll. Continue rolling and deducting hit points until your total equals or exceeds 34, or until your hit points are exhausted. If you manage to get a total of 34 or more, turn to 205. If you do not, your adventure ends here.

177

In a situation like this, when someone surprises you from behind, the simplest spell is often the most useful. You dive for the ground and toss a handful of sand at Arno before he

realizes what you're doing.

"SHHHHHH!"

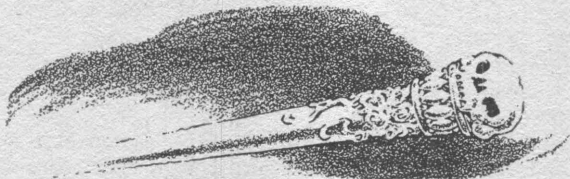
The Sleep enchantment is one of the easiest and fastest-acting spells you know, and it takes Arno completely by surprise.

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 30 or more, turn to **72**. If it is less than 30, turn to **106**.

178

Deciding against any dweomer that would have to destroy Arno's shield to affect him, you begin to cast Polymorph Other, one of your most powerful and reliable formulas. Unfortunately, it's also one of your longest incantations and cannot be hurried without possibly disastrous results.

Halfway through the ritual chant, Arno raises his hand and snaps his wrist. You catch a glimpse of a tiny piece of silk in his black hand, resembling a miniature whip. You feel an invisible cord-like dweomer wrap itself around your bronzewood staff, disrupting your concentration on the Polymorph Other formula. Arno jerks his hand as if he's popping a real whip and the staff flies uncontrollably from your grasp!



Before you can recover your balance or your wits, the "Archmagus of Tikandia" charges forward and lands a vicious blow on your forehead with his enchanted mace. You have no way to protect yourself.

Roll 2 dice. If your permanent Protection from Evil spell is active, subtract 2 from the result. Then deduct the total from your current hit points for a new hit point total and turn to **152**—if you're still alive, that is!

The first thing I have to do is attack that Wizard Lock spell, you think. Dispel Magic is one of the many incantations you've memorized, and one of the most useful. Standing with your arms crossed in front of your chest, you concentrate on the energies the sorcerer-kings must have used to seal the tarrasque inside the temple.



"*Vyehdo!*" you shout, letting your arms burst apart in a gesture of dismissal.

The powerful phrase causes radiant energy from your chest to pour into the seam around the granite slab. Under normal circumstances, any dweomers residing inside the stone would be absorbed by your incantation's own energy and then dispersed into the surrounding air. This time, however, the opposite occurs. The ancient Wizard Lock dweomer is so powerful that it absorbs the Dispel Magic aura!

You stare in amazement at the glowing seam around the gray boulder. The combined powers of the last Bhukodian sorcerers are far too much for even your advanced spell levels to handle!

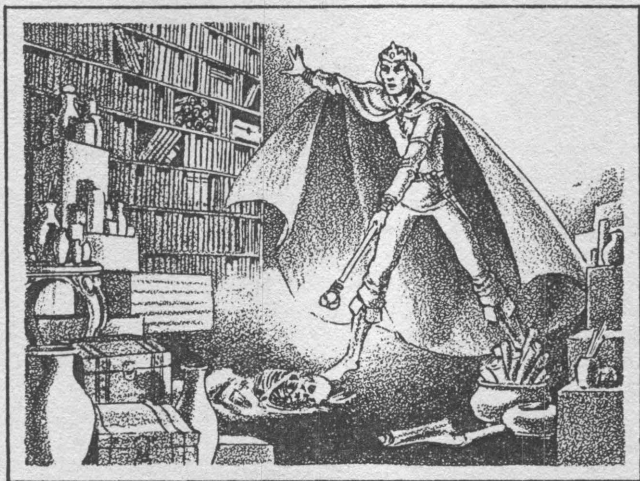
If you haven't used Fireball (191), Knock (82), Teleport (166), Limited Wish (17), or Teleport without Error (186), you might choose one of them now. Be sure to cross it off the List of Spells and then turn to the section indicated. If you've changed your mind about entering the temple, turn to 27.

When the dweomer of the Teleport without Error spell subsides, you find yourself in the same small chamber you've seen so often in the time crystal. Now, however, ev-

everything is lit softly by the blue Wall of Force aura that guards the chamber from the tarrasque.

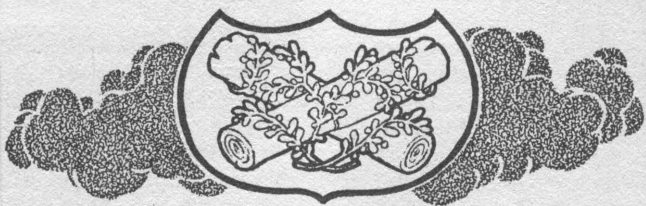
"Can you read my thoughts, Rufyl?" you ask mentally. The familiar and your human companions are waiting outside the door for either a call for help or a warning to evacuate Tikandia. Everything depends on your ability to win the robe and destroy the tarrasque.

"We're waiting, Master," Rufyl answers. You perceive fear in his telepathic voice.



The spell has transported you to a small laboratory of some kind, deep within the innermost sanctum of the lost temple. Books and scrolls line the walls, while shelves are stacked with jars, vials, boxes and pouches of every size and shape. The labels are yellowed with age but clearly written in the same ancient High Elvish used by the Bhukodian sorcerer-kings.

A stench of decay and filth assaults your senses, only moments before a horrible undead thing with burning eyes rises from a bench to your right amid a suffocating cloud of dust. The mummified creature wears a thick, gray robe,



similar in color and material to your Cloak of Elvenkind, and a tarnished crown of some dark metal, perhaps adamantite.

You realize with a sense of terror that this must be the undead lich of the last sorcerer-king of Bhukod! He has survived the past five centuries since the sealing of the Temple by his own great powers and those of the robe he wears—the Robe of the Archmagi!

The Crown of Aerdrie is throbbing even faster than your pulse, and you can see its rhythmic glow reflected in some of the dusty bottles and jars on the laboratory shelves above the lich.

“Hear the command of Carr Delling, son of Landor Delling. By the combined power of Aerdrie’s crown and the Sceptre of Bhukod, I enjoin you to give me the robe you fashioned to control the tarrasque beyond that Wall of Force dweomer.”

The undead creature’s red eyes flare for several seconds before it responds to your demand. Then it seems to laugh with a scratching, crackling sound.

“And I enjoin you to give me the wand that your thieving sire stole from this temple!” it replies. “Hand it to me!”

“*NO, MASTER!*” Rufyl’s telepathic scream makes you back away from the lich in a quick movement just as his leathery claw of a hand reaches for the sceptre. You tear the hide covering from the sceptre, and its light blinds the lich with its sudden intensity.

“Give me that!” the thing commands again, rushing blindly for the relic. You wave the sceptre past your side, imitating the movements of animal tamers and bull-

baiters you've seen. The blinded lich charges past you, directly into his own Wall of Force.

A flurry of blue-white sparks and tiny lightning bolts of the same color rises at the moment the lich hits the Wall of Force. You rush at the creature, swinging the Sceptre of Bhukod at its cadaverous face. The three pearls, wrapped in their gnarled gold setting, shine with greater intensity than ever before. Your blow shatters the mummified skull just below the thing's right eye socket. The red beams of light within the hollow orbs vanish immediately, and the creature collapses with a clatter of loose bones. At the same instant, the curtain of blue light dies, leaving only the glare of the Bhukodian sceptre to brighten both the secret laboratory and the altar room. For one frozen moment, the tarrasque pauses his licking of Arno's gore at the base of the altar and eyes you hungrily.

You waste no time stripping the plain gray robe from the lich's collapsed skeleton, shaking it free of the smaller bones and dust before slipping it on over your own Cloak of Elvenkind. As soon as the enchanted garment clears the floor, it magically adjusts its length to your shoe tops and begins to glow with a dancing pattern of changing colors and hues.

The puzzled and stimulated tarrasque ceases its licking and lumbers across the room to the dais where you're standing. You've already got your spellbook open at your father's Limited Wish spell, which is the same one that Arno was trying to use when the beast bit off his head and shoulder.

Trusting in your magic, you read the inscription in a loud and confident voice.



"Hear my desire, forces of the nether planes! I wish for the immediate death of this beast!"

You know that something is happening as a result of your incantation because the tarrasque's lidless eyes glaze with pain almost instantly. Aerdrie's crown is throbbing so powerfully and quickly that your skull seems to be echoing its staccato beat.

Suddenly the giant beast roars in agony and begins to bite its own belly! The altar room is showered with its red-orange blood and digestive juices as the frenzied creature rips its own stomach open and claws at its entrails. With a final hideous shriek, the monster collapses on the blood-drenched floor of the altar room, clutching the offending item in his shattered teeth—the red-hot Crown of Lolth!

You remove the throbbing Sorcerer's Crown from your head, comparing its flashes with those of its twin in the tarrasque's mouth—they're identical! The Crown of Aerdrie must have somehow caused the molecules of Lolth's Crown to move faster while inside the tarrasque's stomach.

"By all that's holy, I've never seen anything like that!" Thayne's astonished outburst releases all the pent-up tension inside you and your companions as they join you. Laughter of near-maniacal proportions echoes throughout the subterranean ruins, as you become the first to celebrate the liberation of Tikandia from the threats of both the tarrasque and the evil mage, Arno.

Turn to 212.

181

You know immediately that the Teleport spell did something very wrong to you! Your head feels stuffy and swollen as the molecules of your brain magically reform themselves in their new location. . . . which happens to be inside of a rock floor!

You feel a sharp pain in your neck as your body materializes, entirely suspended in space from your trapped neck.

Imprisoned within solid rock in this way, you can only hope that the weight of your body will break your neck long before the tarrasque discovers your enticing legs dangling free at the level of its mouth! ✖

182

"I think Dalris is right about changing our plans in the middle of an invasion—it could only cause trouble," you tell Garn. "I don't like the looks of those lights, though. That's something unexpected, and I always worry about the unexpected."

The paladin silently studies the horizon for a few more seconds. "I want to ask Thayne how he feels about it," he says finally. "His rangers will be in on the fighting, and he ought to help us decide."

You nod your agreement. "I'll send the signal. You and Dalris may need to prepare your fighters."

They both take one last look at the glowing harbor and then go below to alert their warriors. You cross the deck to have the signalman ask your old tutor about the plans—and about the mysterious harbor lights.

Turn to 53.

183

My first objective is to find the Robe of the Archmagi, not to fight the tarrasque, you think quickly. Whatever that creature is doing, maybe it'll stay occupied long enough for me to find the robe.

You may try to find the robe by searching the subterranean temple yourself (169) or you might be able to use spells such as Teleport (196), Teleport without Error (112) or Limited Wish (148) to take you directly to the Robe of the Archmagi.

If you wish to use one of the spells, mark it off your List of Spells and turn to the section indicated. If you decide not to use magic, turn to 35.

184

"GET OUT OF THE STREET!" you shout, just as another volley of quarrels clatters at your feet, your Cloak of Elvenkind preventing you from being a target. The nimble Dalris is already diving for the shelter of a wall, while the fully armored Garn flips his helm down and tries to see where the archers are located.

"Show yourselves, cowards!" storms Thayne. He's stand-

ing squat-legged in the center of the street with a gas dart in his fist, ready to hurl it at anything that moves.

"Take cover, Thayne!" you urge the elf, but he pays no attention to you at all. Just then, something shiny moving above you catches your attention and you glimpse a dark figure on the roof raising a weapon. Your feet leave the ground at the same instant that a crossbow quarrel streaks toward Thayne's chest. You plow into his hard little figure, knocking him to the street.

"HELP!" screams the elf-svirfneblin. "Some unseen monster has me around the waist!"

Before you can say anything or deactivate your Cloak of Elvenkind, Thayne slaps two of his war darts together right in your face! There's a sudden small explosion, followed by the release of a hot gas that gets into your eyes and blinds you instantly!

"It's Carr, you idiot!" screams Dalris. "Get him out of the street!"

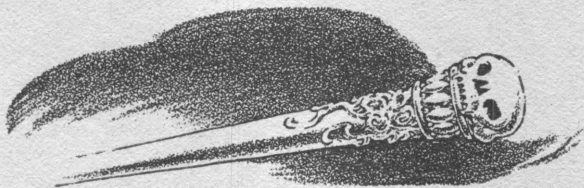
In agony, you feel yourself being swiftly pulled by a wailing gnome toward the curb amid a hail of crossbow shafts. You can also hear the clangs and thuds of the short bolts striking something metal only inches away from your back. Then you hear Garn's voice in your ear and realize that he has been shielding you with his own armored body.

"We've got to get him someplace we can treat those gas burns on his eyes," says Dalris. "Let's forget Arno for the moment and postpone our invasion. Carr can't handle a sorcery duel in this condition!"

The bard's suggestion immediately troubles you. You don't want to be responsible for postponing the invasion, yet you doubt if anyone else will be able to handle Arno's magic. If you want to go on to the cathedral despite your injury, turn to 123. If you'd rather postpone the invasion and wait until you're stronger to face Arno, turn to 105.

185

You take time to pronounce each word of the Wall of Force incantation carefully, and Arno reaches you before you can complete it. He strikes you from behind with his magical club, stifling the last few words. You lurch forward, bleed-



ing from a small scalp wound, and try to murmur a hasty defensive formula.

"Quiet!" snarls the black magician, again hitting you so hard on the back of your head that you pass out from the pain.

Roll 2 dice. If your permanent Protection from Evil spell is active, subtract 2 from the result. Either way, deduct the adjusted result from your current hit points for a new hit-point total and turn to 152—if you're still alive, that is!

186

The fact that the ancient Wizard Lock is still in place around the granite slab must mean that your father used some other method to enter the Bhukodian temple. You hastily pull your traveling spellbook from beneath the Cloak of Elvenkind and scan Landor's encrypted pages to get some idea of the incantations he kept with him at all times.

The first formula in the book is the one for the powerful Teleport without Error spell.

Of course! you tell yourself. *He didn't need to remove or bypass the Wizard Lock because he teleported himself into the temple!* After your last attempt to use your own Teleport spell, when your whole right leg materialized inside a tree trunk, leaving your hip permanently out of kilter, you began to study Landor's more advanced procedure.

Your fingers are trembling as you unlace the stiff cord that binds the parchment pages inside the thin book. You don't want to harm the rest of the spells if something goes wrong with this one. As soon as the page is free, you replace the book beneath your cloak and begin to read the incantation as if it were a magical scroll.

"I call upon thee, powers of every plane, to suspend the

laws of being. Erase my existence at this dimensional point-in-time and recreate it . . . ”

In horror, you suddenly realize that you must finish the incantation with the destination exactly where you wish to be teleported. If you had studied the spell in greater detail before using it, you'd have been prepared with a precise destination. Now, however, the only phrases you can think of to complete the incantation before you are 'erased' are *"inside the tomb of the tarrasque"* (203) and *"inside the Temple of Power"* (94).

Select one of these destinations quickly, before you are obliterated!

187

"Did you hear what he just said about the 'Arno creature'?" cries Garn after the beast has vanished. "He could only have gotten that from one of our minds! He probably even knows about the Robe of the Archmagi, Carr! It's on all our minds, and he reads minds as if they were open books!"

You shake your head gravely. "There's nothing you can do to guard your thoughts against such a talented telepath. It's difficult enough to hide my thoughts from Rufyl, here."

"*When do you ever do that?*" the beast demands, sending you a sensation of mildly hurt feelings.

"*Whenever I want to think about something without interruptions, like right now!*" you chastise him.

"Well, why are we just standing here doing nothing?" demands Thayne. "Haul out that cursed sceptre and lead the way. Four hours should put us at the ruins right after day-break."

The Sceptre of Bhukod's heavy golden shaft is adorned with hieroglyphics carved both by its ancient owners and by your father. The three immense pearls at its head begin to glow instantly as soon as you remove the magic item from its soft hide casing. You extend it in a sweeping movement, watching it brighten as you face the west, just as the opinicus suggested.

"West, it is," you say, and you turn to lead your companions into the deeper swamp. Turn to 133.

The Limited Wish spell is one of your most powerful—and dangerous—incantations. You have to be very careful about the way you phrase a wish, as everyone knows. Yours is a simple wish as you read from Lander's parchment and substitute your own words:

"Hear my desire, forces of the nether planes! I wish to find the Robe of the Archmagi."

At the instant you complete the incantation, the parchment bursts into smokeless, heatless flame and turns into a fine white ash in your hands. Your vision begins to blur. It seems as if you're standing perfectly still in a spinning bottle, the curved sides of which are the trees at the Wealwood boundary. The images soon become so blurred that you see nothing more until the dweomer transports you to a very small room.

Turn to 99.



Surprised when you turn your back on him, Arno delays whatever incantation he had prepared just long enough for you to fling a pinch of phosphorus at the temple entrance and mutter the words of the Wall of Fire spell.

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 29 or more, turn to 61. If it is less than 29, turn to 93.

"That's not an ordinary Continual Light spell," you tell Dalris. "If Arno cast that piece of magic, he has grown more powerful than I've imagined. I suspect that the only way we're going to dispel that dweomer is to destroy the

spellcaster. Find Garn and Thayne and meet me on the avenue of the cathedral.”

You pull the Cloak of Elvenkind’s cowl over your head and let its dweomer blend your body with the night. Then you leave the bard at the watchtower and walk with Rufyl into the streets of Saven.

Turn to 141.



191

I think I need something a little more drastic than Dispel Magic, you tell yourself. If that Wizard Lock has held up for three centuries, its magic is too powerful for my spells to disperse. I'll have to use brute force.

You take a small metal box from a hidden pocket and remove a tiny ball of bat guano mixed with sulphur. Pressing the component into the palm of your right hand, you focus your magical strength into your index finger and point directly at the granite slab.

“Shassul!” you command.

A streak of pure energy leaps from your finger and forms a huge ball of fire just before it strikes the massive barrier. The explosion is so powerful that it knocks you to the ground, but when the black smoke and debris settle, you’re dismayed to see that the awesome destructive force of your Fireball spell has only managed to blacken the rough stone of the barricade.

You leap to your feet, your emotions in turmoil. Collecting your thoughts, you decide to try something else to open the massive barricade.

If you haven’t used Knock (82), Teleport (166), Teleport without Error (186), or Limited Wish (17), you might choose one of them now. Be sure to cross the one you select

off your List of Spells and then turn to the section indicated. You may, of course, change your mind and decide not to open the tomb of the tarrasque (27).

192

Thayne removes the simple band of polished adamantite that is so sacred to his people on Seagate Island. "Take it," he says, a little begrudgingly. "Do what you must do, but try to get it back to me in one piece."

You grin at your old tutor and place the Sorcerer's Crown on your own head. You then take Dalris's arm gently but firmly in your hand. You quickly lead her a few paces away from the others, then face her steady gaze.

"I want you to do something for me, no matter what happens in there."

"What is it?" Her tone is understanding but anxious. She knows how dangerous magic is, and she has great respect for it even if she disapproves of it.

"I want this temple to be restored to the people of Kandia, and I want their magic returned to them. My father tried for a time to give it back to the people of Wealwood, and so did I. That was my only crime with you, Dalris. I'm neither good nor evil. I'm just a man with two passions, one fulfilled and the other not. You've denied me both those passions, first because you hate magic, and secondly because you could never let yourself love a mage—even one who has always loved you, as I have. Promise me that the Kandian people—OUR people—will know the grandeur of Bhukod again!"

Your appeal brings tears to the barbarian poet's eyes. Her mouth trembles, but you turn before she has a chance to reply and head for the door to the altar chamber. Garn stops you and, without speaking, presses his thumb to your forehead, lips and chin, an ancient blessing in the Order of Holy Dyan.

If you already let Garn heal you aboard the galley, he cannot heal you again. If he hasn't healed you yet, roll 2 dice and add the result to your current hit points. Then turn to 176 if the tarrasque is dead, or to 212 if it's still alive.



193

Aware that the tarrasque has had centuries to learn every path in this temple and that one victim may not satisfy its appetite, you move cautiously toward the white stream of what appears to be daylight. There is a narrow passage, leading up and out! You know the roughly formed tunnel won't lead you to the Robe of the Archmagi, but your curiosity is aroused. *Who else has penetrated the temple? Who else would dare besides Arno?*

You work your way slowly up the passageway, wary of what may be outside.

"Carr! You're here! We've been wandering and searching ever since you left us."

"Dalris, how did you find me? How did you know this passage led into the temple?"

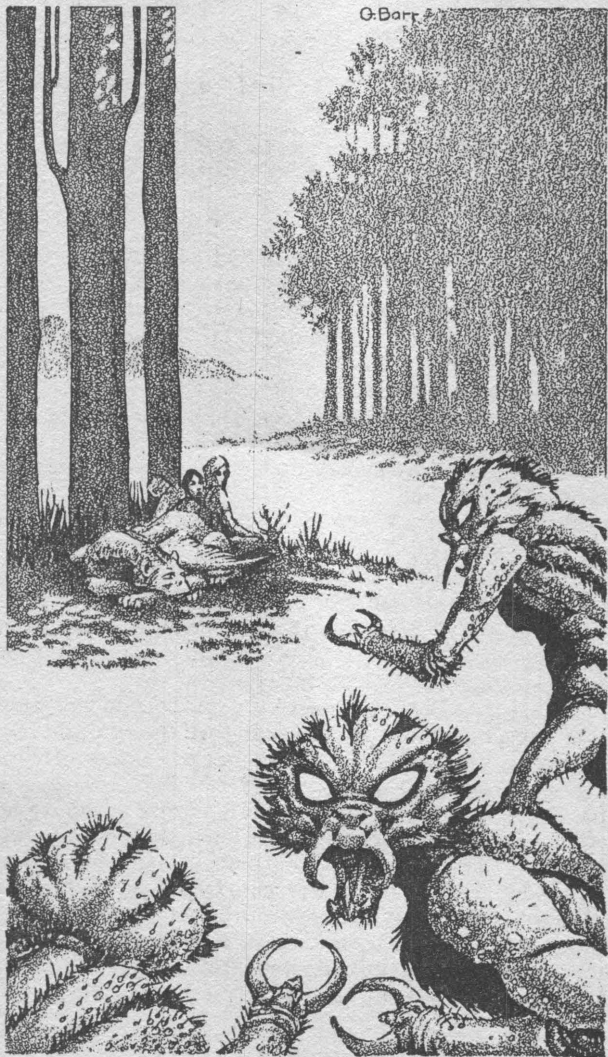
"I didn't. We've been fanning out, searching the area, looking for you. I just found this hole, and I was going to get the others and go in looking for you."

You sense that Dalris's concern is genuine, and you reach out for her hand, pulling her back toward the sunlight. You emerge from the hole and settle yourselves thankfully under a tree to tell your story.

You regret that you can only tell her what you have accomplished so far, before you must leave her again to find the Robe of the Archmagi. You are about to explain, when your head fills with a terrible scream from Rufyl, who must be somewhere nearby. Dalris points behind you, staring in wide-eyed terror. You turn, only to feel the first of many black ugly pincers clamp into your flesh.

A barrage of confused telepathic messages informs you

G. Barr



that the passage you crawled through was made by meenlocks, and you violated their lair. You have no chance to run, or cast a spell, or tell Dalris that you now realize how important she is to you. A dozen more sets of viscious mandibles have pierced your skin...and you feel nothing more. ✖

194

"Is that creature gone?" whispers Dalris. She cranes her neck and peers into the darkness.

"The question is—was it ever really here?" observes Garn. "I never sensed evil about the thing. In fact, there was an aura of holiness radiating from it, as if it were a messenger from the gods."

"It's gone, all right," you tell the bard. "I can't explain that 'holiness' you felt, Garn, but I can assure you that the thing was really here. I saw it perfectly with my infra-vision."

"It was truly here," adds Thayne. "As for the 'holiness,' I've heard that the opinicus is more formidable than a hollyphant when combatting evil."

"The warning about Arno concerns me," you tell your companions. "I was hoping to have several days to explore the ruins before having to deal with him, but now it seems that the problem is more immediate. We need to start for the ruins immediately if we're to get there by daybreak."

Turn to 133.

195

The Teleport spell seems to be working this time. Just as you remember from your last experience with the dangerous incantation, the molecules of your body seem to dissipate, spreading apart enough to fit themselves between molecules of alien substances.

While the dweomer is active, all that you can see is a hazy light, with little sense of movement. It's only when the spell's energy begins to rematerialize your body that you realize that something has gone terribly wrong—more wrong than when you ended up as a tree branch!

As the molecules of your lower body solidify, you feel a

great pressure being exerted upon your legs and hips. As your sight clears, you learn the horrible result of your magic—your entire body, from the waist down, is part of a solid rock floor!

As your mind clears of the immediate, all-consuming horror, you become aware of a blue glow. You are inside a large rocky chamber with an ancient circular altar at one side. Behind the altar, you see a narrow rectangle of some sort of shimmering blue light that casts its soft glow on everything in the ritual chamber.

Then you become aware of a low, rumbling wheezing sound from behind you. Within the rocky vise, you try to twist your neck to the other occupant of the room . . . but the huge tarrasque has awakened from its centuries-long nap so hungry that you never have a chance to see the creature with the razor-edged teeth that sever your trapped torso even with the floor. ☒



196

Teleport is a fairly simple but dangerous spell. If you don't specify precisely where you wish to be transported, you can send yourself into a rock or, as your injured hip testifies, into a tree trunk.

You're a little reluctant to risk the powerful and unpredictable dweomer again, but it is probably the quickest way to find the Robe of the Archmagi. You try to ignore the distant sounds of combat between the tarrasque and its quarry, concentrating instead upon your memorized Teleport incantation.

"Rulers of the material world and its dimensions! I ask

you to transport my physical being into the location conjured in my thoughts!"

As soon as you utter the last syllable, you focus your thoughts on the last time you saw the robe in the time crystal. You imagine yourself inside the small magical laboratory, watching the lesser Bhukodian priests dressing their senior archmagus with their final weapon of desperation—the Robe of the Archmagi.



Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is more than 33, turn to 195. If it's between 27 and 33, turn to 99. If it is less than 27, turn to 181.

197

Ever since you injured your hip in a teleport experiment, you've been reluctant to use the unpredictable Teleport incantation, but Jarmel's explanation of the current emergency forces you to ignore your misgivings and use Teleport to enter the Temple of Power quickly.

Focusing your thoughts on the last time you saw the Robe of the Archmagi in the time crystal, you recite the special incantation.

"Rulers of the material world and its dimensions! I ask you to transport my physical being into the location conjured in my thoughts!"

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is more than 33, turn to 195. If it's between 27 and 33, turn to 99. If it is less than 27, turn to 181.

198

The morning hours pass slowly while you stand guard over the entrance to the Bhukodian temple. You've become so accustomed to the sounds of the birds and animals in the

wild marsh that their sudden silence alarms you. Then you hear the unmistakable sounds of footsteps and excited voices coming from behind the pyramid.

Do you want to investigate the noises under the cover of your enchanted cloak (163) or to remain at the entrance to the Temple of Power (175)?

199

Before you do anything else, you face the carved archway and the granite slab with your arms down, palms outward, in the position required for the Detect Evil spell. Then you open your body and mind to whatever evil auras may linger at the temple entrance.

Motionlessly you wait, focusing all of your energy on sensing malevolent forces, ancient or new, in the blocked archway. Instead of experiencing a warning of evil presences, you feel only the warmth of the morning sun on your face.

If you've activated your Detect Magic (90) or Comprehend Languages (153) spells, select one of them and turn to the section indicated. If neither of these spells is active, turn to 27.



200

"I had to leave you in the marsh because I thought Arno might get here before us if we waited until morning," you explain. "I knew that I could communicate with you through Rufyl if I needed to, so it wasn't as if I actually deserted you."

"That's exactly how it was!" Dalris challenges.

"She's right, Delling!" agrees the paladin. "You left us

stranded in the swamp with no clue to your whereabouts.”

“How *did* you find me?” you ask Garn, suddenly curious.

“Thayne did it with the Crown of Aerdrie,” the paladin replies. “He discovered that it began to vibrate whenever he faced this direction, and we assumed that it had something to do with the ruins of Bhukod. All we had to do was use it like a compass.”

“How curious!” you exclaim. “I wonder if the Sceptre of Bhukod works the same way?”

“Is this your so-called ‘Temple of Power?’ ” asks Dalris in tones of disbelief. You can tell she still hasn’t forgiven you for leaving them without explanations, but you push it out of your mind for the present.

“Let me show you the main entrance,” you urge them. Then you turn and start to retrace your steps around the pyramid, but you freeze in your tracks when you hear the familiar sound of chanting. You wave to your companions to stay still, then creep quietly forward. Standing at the archway, just completing a magical gesture, is a painfully familiar, dark figure. Arno!

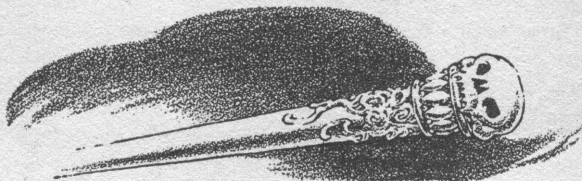
Turn to 172.

201

The ball of bat guano and sulphur is already in your hand before the sand of your Sleep spell settles to the ground.

“*Shassull*” you cry, pointing at the center of Arno’s enchanted shield. A whirling sphere of yellowish energy springs from your finger and grows into a large fireball as it smashes into the fan-shaped shield.

There’s a violent explosion of fire and smoke as the energies of the two spells collide. You crouch low to the ground, shielding your face from the heat. Suddenly, Arno’s figure appears through the smoke, his skull-mace raised above



your head. You try to parry the blow with your staff, but your muscles are not as flexible as they used to be.

The enchanted club strikes your forehead, right between the eyes, and you crumple unconscious to the ground.

Roll 2 dice. If your permanent Protection from Evil spell is active, subtract 2 from the result. Then deduct the total from your current hit points for a new hit point total and turn to 152—if you're still alive, that is!

202

Rufyl and Thayne are the first of your companions to enter the open door. The elf-svirfneblin is holding his mithral pickaxe ready for anything and appears to be enjoying himself tremendously in the subterranean ruins. You remark to yourself how significant a change in body can be to one's mind.

Both Thayne and the familiar freeze when they see the carcass of the tarrasque taking up nearly the whole room. Garn and Dalris enter behind them and stare at the great beast of horror legends as if it were only hibernating.

"Where have you been?" Dalris demands, either angrily or hurtfully—you aren't sure which.

You describe your adventures very quickly, ending with the joint spellcasting by you and Arno. "That's why I must have the Crown of Aerdrie, Thayne," you add. "Arno is very close to the Robe of the Archmagi and the only way to stop him is to be stronger than he is. The Sorcerer's Crown, together with the Sceptre of Bhukod, should give me the strength I need. I lost a tremendous amount of energy during my duel with Arno."

The elf and Dalris exchange quick glances, as if they've already been discussing what to say to you whenever, or IF, they ever saw you again. Garn points to the dead tarrasque.

"Those scales are worth a fortune to armorers everywhere," he says absentmindedly. It seems to you that he's trying to hide some kind of discomfort he's feeling toward you.

"*That's correct, Master,*" reports Rufyl by telepathy. "*They were very angry when you left them in the marsh, and*



now they're wondering whether or not they can trust you."

"They've GOT to trust me!" you tell Rufyl. "The future of Tikandia depends upon it!"

Roll two dice and add the result to your charisma skill score. If the total is 16 or more, turn to **192**. If it is less than 16, turn to **204**.

203

As soon as the illusion of spinning stops, you find yourself in a dark, cavernous chamber that smells of ancient decay and underground moisture. You cast your eyes around the huge room, but see no signs of life, even with your Infravision spell.

You feel a throbbing warmth on your back and realize that the Sceptre of Bhukod is pulsating rapidly inside its protective casing. You reach for the enchanted weapon and see an eerie white light emanating from the edges of the furry container. When you remove the sceptre, its three huge pearls flare like beacons, spreading as much light as a Light spell in the spacious room around you.

It's a cavernous chamber of marble, with dozens of columns supporting the massive rock slab that forms the ceiling. Rubble and ancient debris, including broken urns, splintered furniture, and bone fragments are strewn throughout the chamber. There's only one exit from the huge room—an empty doorway where a pair of massive double portals once hung—but it looks like only darkness lies beyond.

You take one faltering step toward the open doorway but freeze in terror when a great horned head appears in the opening, blocking your escape. The ravenous monster probably hasn't eaten in hundreds of years, but its luck is about to improve. ☒

Thayne clears his throat and scowls. "I'd like to do that, Carr, but I can't let you risk losing the Crown of Aerdrie to Arno or destroying it during the Teleport. He's already got the twin Crown of Lolth and maybe even the Robe of the Archmagi. If something happened to you on the other side of that Wall of Force dweomer, he could add the Sceptre of Bhukod and the Sorcerer's Crown to what he already has. No, my friend, I can't let you take it with you, and I suggest that you delay your confrontation with Arno until you know a little more about magic and about dark elves."

"Listen to him, Carr!" pleads Dalris. "I . . . uh, WE . . . don't want you to take this risk! The tarrasque is dead and Arno's tyranny in Tikandia is crushed! Saven is ours and our forces are landing mass invasions along the eastern coast to root out the last of Arno's 'Knights of Truth.' It's just a duel between two sorcerers now. Give it up!"

The bard's face is reddening beneath her deep tan and you're tempted by her plea to leave without this final confrontation. Garn is quiet and stolid. You know the devout paladin won't forget the impact of the evil he has seen here for a long time.

Do you want to quit now and postpone your final encounter with Arno for another day (209), or teleport yourself to him in one last try to win the Robe of the Archmagi (210)?

The effort drains most of your life force, but you finally manage to direct the sceptre's power against that of the Robe. The Crown of Aerdrie is tingling, and you suppose that it resembles Lolth's crown on Arno's dark forehead. That adamantite tiara is throbbing rhythmically with a yellow glow, as if it is keeping time with Arno's heart beat. You continue to pour your concentration out against Arno's even as the light that is pulsing from the band of precious metal on Arno's head breaks its rhythm and starts to flash sporadically.

The colors of the robe begin to fade, and your opponent falls unconscious to the floor in the center of his penta-

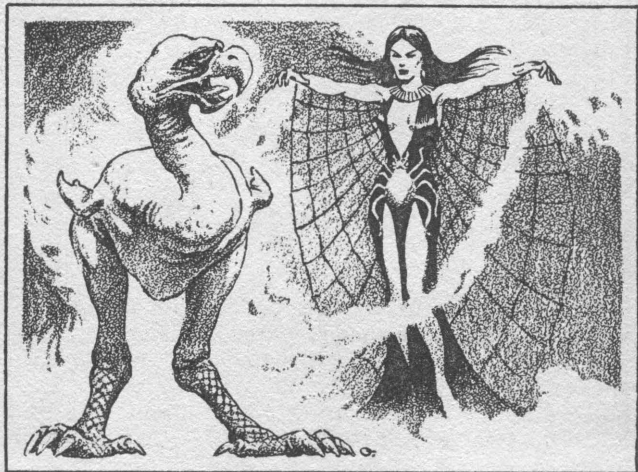
gram. The Crown of Lolth falls off Arno's white hair and rolls toward your feet. You start to reach for it, but Rufyl stops you with another telepathic warning.

"Don't touch it, Master. Lolth has sent her handmaiden, Yochlol, to fetch it!"

Even as Rufyl's warning reaches your weakened mind, a dark figure appears in the shadows of the robe chamber. Yochlol, the handmaiden of Lolth emerges, her arachnid features silhouetted against the strange lighting of the room. "Know, servant of Lolth and Pazuzu, that you have failed, and this is your punishment," she says as she raises her arms menacingly over Arno's unmoving body.

As you watch in horror, you see the faded Robe of the Archmagi tighten around Arno's body as it bloats into a gross and distorted form. The robe bursts, and the stench from the creature Arno has become—a grotesque axe beak—nearly overpowers you.

When the transformation is complete, Yochlol picks up the Crown of Lolth from the floor, raises her hands toward the giant, misshapen bird, and says, "Depart, ye abomina-



tion." The axe beak vanishes, and Yochlol walks back through the shadows she came from.

"I've heard of 'Lolth's vengeance,' but I never realized even she would be so cruel to one of her followers!" whispers Thayne. "It looks like your rival is destined to spend the rest of his existence in that miserable form. He certainly won't be causing us any more trouble."

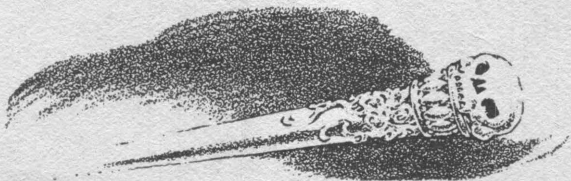
You look at the waning light of the Sceptre of Bhukod and nod. "Let's get out of this place before it's too dark to see our way. I don't think I have enough strength left even for a simple Light spell."

Turn to 212.

206

Ignoring the growing stiffness and pain in your hip, you slip into a crouch like Arno. You hold the bronzewood staff in front of your chest, hoping to parry anything your rival may try to do. When Arno sees your limp, he sneers in a way that reminds you of a shark spotting a weakness in another fish.

The dark wizard feints to his right with his dagger, then sweeps his heavy skull-mace across your staff and fells you with a crushing blow to your cheek. Then he begins to use his dagger. ✘



207

Surprised by your turning your back on him, Arno delays whatever incantation he had prepared just long enough for you to fling a pinch of powdered diamond at the temple entrance and mutter the words of the Wall of Force spell.

Roll 2 dice and add the result to your intelligence skill score. If the total is 29 or more, turn to 37. If it is less than 29, turn to 185.

Arno sees what you're doing and rushes after you, hoping to reach you before you finish casting the Web spell. His sudden charge disturbs your concentration for only an instant or two, but it's enough of a distraction to throw your timing off. The spell fails, and your enemy grabs you by the fabric of your Cloak of Elvenkind.

Arno twists you sharply out of the entrance, slamming you down against the shattered granite on the ground. Stunned when your head hits a sharp piece of stone, you are barely conscious when the half-drow wizard lifts a large fragment of granite and crushes your skull. Your worries concerning the tarrasque are over, but Tikandia's are just beginning. ✖

"Let Arno have the Robe—for now, anyway. But we'll be back!" you vow.

As you leave the ruins of Bhukod, you're glad that your primary mission was a success—to end Arno's evil in Tikandia and to slay the tarrasque. Yet you will always have the nagging feeling that you should have tracked your rival to the Robe of the Archmagi and whatever other secrets of Bhukodian sorcery he may have discovered. Perhaps there'll be another chance. . . . ✖



"We can't let Arno rebuild his powers with the Robe of the Archmagi and whatever other secrets of the Bhukodian sorcerer-kings remain in these ruins!" you tell your

companions. "We've stopped him this time, but the next time may well be a different story if he possesses such power! I'll have to face him without your help!"

Turn to 169.

211

"We can't fight that thing, even with Aerdrie's crown!" says Dalris. She's watching in horror as the beast finishes its appetizer.

"I can't let you have the Sorcerer's Crown," says Thayne. "We need it to protect our island from Pazuzu's demons. Look what happened to Lolth's crown. It might have let Arno control Pazuzu, but now it's in the tarrasque's belly! I never should have brought the crown to Tikandia."

You glance at Garn, but the paladin is staring glassy-eyed at the immense evil monster gnawing on Arno's last leg. "What's the matter?" you're tempted to ask. "Too much evil for the New Order of Blessed Dyan to handle?"



You shrug their explanations aside and remove your traveling spellbook from your cloak. "Then I'll have to do it myself," you tell them.

Turning to the Teleport without Error incantation, you focus your thoughts on the last images you had of the Robe of the Archmagi when you saw it in the crystal. You can only hope its present location is the same as that you remember seeing.

"I call upon thee, powers of every plane, to suspend thy laws of being. Erase my existence at this dimensional point in time and recreate it in the chamber of the Robe of the Archmagi!"

Turn to 99.

Your father's dreams of a Bhukodian renaissance of the magical arts is becoming a reality, with the transfer of College Arcane to the ancient Temple of Power. You and the senior magi of the College have found enough research material crammed in the lich's magical laboratory to outlast the next four generations of students.

Thayne's mountain elves are returning in large numbers to the highlands of Wealwood, and the Kandians themselves are reclaiming their own continent in the name of New Bhukod. Garn's Reformed Order of Holy Dyan is flourishing throughout Tikandia, combatting pockets of evil resisters to the Bhukodian renaissance.

And Dalris smiles at you more often these days. Rufyl says that's the best reward you've begun to reap from the past decade of turmoil, but pseudodragons are notorious romantics.

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